Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge and perception of diabetes in a semi-urban Omani population

Version: 2 Date: 26 March 2008

Reviewer: Rainford Jonathan Wilks

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript has been improved significantly and this has allowed for a better assessment of the science of the manuscript. I am still unclear as to the main message of the paper and whether this message (see Conclusion) is justified by the data presented. Issues of quality of life and primordial prevention of diabetes mellitus seem to be central to the authors message but the data are not there to support these positions.

Major Revision

Abstract: The Conclusion of the Abstract makes reference to a relationship between "public awareness" and "quality of life" but no data are presented on quality of life. It is also unclear how these data relate to the proposed "comprehensive community health education programme directed towards primordial prevention...." The Conclusions are not consistent with the data presented.

Methods: While the sampling method has been clarified, the issue of multiple respondents from the same household and how this might affect the "independence" of each respondent is not addressed. While it may be difficult to address at this stage, the number of households yielding the 628 eligible participants and 563 participants would give some insight into this issue.

Results: a) Table 4 should be interpretable on its own including relevant footnotes to explain abbreviations etc. Also, nowhere in the text or in the Table 4 is it made clear what confounding factors were controlled for in the multivariate analysis. b) There is still some controversy as to whether excessive sugar intake is an independent risk factor for incident diabetes mellitus. This is worth a comment in the Background, the Results and in the Discussion

Discussion: The role of confounding and bias are insufficiently addressed in the discussion. The authors need to confine their discussion to the data presented and how it relates to the "state of the art" rather than alluding to concepts which have not been addressed and are not directly related to these data.

Minor Essential:

a) This first sentence from the Background needs to be rephrased: "Diabetes mellitus continues to be a major threat to global public health and it rapidly gets rise all over the world".
b) The statement (in paragraph 3 of the Background): "With this background, examining how diabetes is perceived among the public so that health education can be charted, is one of the strong possible avenues to heighten quality of life of those individuals with high risk for diabetes" is difficult to understand. As in the Abstract, this concept of "quality of life" is mentioned but is not pursued. This issue has not been addressed by the study, yet it seems to be an important part of the message of the paper. c) A definition of Family History would be useful in the methods.

d) The Discussion includes the repetition of much of the Results and this could be avoided.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.