Reviewer's report

Title: Comparison of general practitioners and rheumatologists' prescription patterns for patients with knee osteoarthritis

Version: 1 Date: 6 December 2010

Reviewer: Caroline Brand

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General comments

This is a well written study, pertaining to an important and increasing population with OA knee. The topic is of interest and the authors have focused on a whole of nation survey, which provides an overview of OA knee treatment in France.

The abstract is clear

Major revisions

Methods.

1. Please state the relationship between GPs and RHs. Are RH patients referred from GPs or can consumers approach RHs directly? This may have significant impact on types of patients seen.

2. Please state the total eligible population of GPs and RH and % invited to participate.

3. Were RHs oversampled in view of their much smaller numbers than GPs?

4. Do GPs have 'special interests' ie could there have been some with a special interest in rheumatology and was this assessed?

5. As treatment is the key focus of the survey please describe in more detail the definition of these as used in the survey; NSAIDs vs low dose NSAIDs, physical therapy (?GP prescribed or physiotherapy), SYSADOA etc

Discussion

Please consider the reasons for RHs patient being systematically different to GP patients in more detail

A key difference is use of intra-articular therapies by RHs. Can the authors comment on the evidence (or lack of evidence) about the relative effectiveness of low dose NSAIDs and SYSADOA. Are patients not seeing RHs being potentially disadvantaged and how would this question be addressed in future studies

Minor revisions
Abstract: please write SYSADOA in full

Background; the last sentence presents results and should be removed

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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