Reviewer's report

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

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Reviewer: roberto caporali

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The authors describe the results of a prospective, National survey on the prescription modalities of GPs and rheumatologists for symptomatic knee OA.

The topic has been addressed by a other studies published so far, with similar results.

Major issues

The number of physicians and patients involved is quite small, and this makes difficult to draw definite conclusions on different treatment modalities.

Some differences in patients characteristics are somewhat unexpected and deserve a more detailed discussion. In particular patients seen by GPs appear to have a more severe disease. Waiting list or limited access to rheumatologists does not sound as the unique explanation.

It should be interesting to know if GPs referred (some) patients to rheumatologists or to different specialists (orthopedics, physiatrists) as well as if patients seen by rheumatologists were or not referred to by GPs.

To better understand data on NSAIDs use it should be reported when the study was carried on: in particular before or after the reports on cardiovascular toxicity of coxibs and the subsequent warnings by FDA and EMA on NSAIDs and Coxibs about cardiovascular toxicity.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests