Reviewer's report

Title: Metabolic and Endocrinologic complications in Beta-thalassemia major: A Multicenter Study in Tehran

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Reviewer: Anne Yardumian

Level of interest: not specified

Advice on publication: Other (see below)

Thank you for sending the revised version of the manuscript, which incorporates practically all the suggestions I had made; for which thanks to the authors.

I have just one outstanding worry, and one additional minor detail to add!

1. Sorry to quibble but I would still like to see the way in which the centres, and then the patients within them were actually randomised. For example, are all the 12 centres of approximately the same size, in terms of patient numbers? If not, was there some effort to include some smaller and some larger centres, or were they truly randomised eg putting the names of all in a hat and pulling out 6 (or some other 'random' method)? This may be of interest as different centres may have subtly different treatment procedures which may possibly impact.

Then within clinic, it would just be good to know how the 258 adolescents were selected - eg every 5th name off an alphabetical list? As before, most other seemingly random methods often can lead to bias. For example, if patients were included just because the physician seeing them in clinic remembered to ask them if they would be included - it is quite possible that the short size of the person coming round the door of the clinic room jogged the memory of the physician that he/she was meant to be recruiting! This is a silly example, but I hope you understand what I mean, and why anything other than formal (even if extremely simple) randomisation methods can skew your results. If the authors could just spell out how they actually did alight on those individuals they asked to be included, I would be happy.

Then the sentence about randomisation is now written at present is also a little difficult to understand ('recruited proportional to size [presume of clinic not patients!] randomly selection method based on registered cases in each of these clinics') but as I think it needs to be altered to
explain the actual process of randomisation adjustments in expression could be made at the same time?

2. The added detail - not very important - is that the word endocrinologic (in the title) is not often used. More usual is 'endocrine complications' or possibly 'endocrinological complications'. I think simply 'endocrine complications' would be the most familiar to most readers.

Competing interests:

None declared.