Reviewer's report

Title: The Use of Clinical Guidelines Highlights Ongoing Educational Gaps in Physicians' Knowledge and Decision Making Related to Diabetes

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Reviewer: Arlene Smaldone

Reviewer's report:

This is clearly an important topic. Use of clinical guidelines has the potential to improve care outcomes for adult patients with diabetes and to decrease variations in practice patterns. However, this manuscript as written presents several areas of concern.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. I do have concerns regarding reporting the findings of a survey that has not been validated.

2. Provide more detail about the survey. Was it restricted to use of guidelines for adults with type 2 diabetes? How many questions in total? How long did the survey take to complete? The authors provide 2 appendices but it is unclear if this was part of the survey or the entire survey.

3. Reporting of survey methodology is also very limited. Survey response rate is not reported although it is mentioned that it was “low overall response rate.” What methods were employed to attempt to improve response rate. Were subjects incentivized to complete the survey? Without this information, the reader cannot be assured that a rigorous process was conducted and may find it difficult to trust the study findings.

4. Statistical analysis: The authors propose use of the student’s t test for continuous outcomes. There do not appear to be any variables that meet this criterion. Please revise to make specific for this analysis.

5. Figure 1: It’s questionable whether this figure is needed as the figure is descriptive only. However, if it is retained, my suggestion is to compare the proportion of physicians rather than the raw number at each knowledge assessment score. Also, the X axis should be labeled by content of the question rather than 1, 2, 3, etc. to make it more informative for the reader. Where are the areas of knowledge deficit?

6. Page 10 – last sentence. There were no differences in prescription of early insulin treatment between GU versus NGU. The sentence should be removed as it is misleading.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. Several references are quite old and should be replaced by newer references. The references in question are numbers 1, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

Discretionary Revisions:

1. Table 2 – remove the asterisk at the end of the title and remove the legend associated with the legend. The title is reasonably clear without it.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.