Reviewer's report

Title: Pain, psychological distress and health-related quality of life at baseline and three months after radical prostatectomy

Version: 1 Date: 10 October 2006

Reviewer: suzanne steginga

Reviewer's report:

General
I thought this was a well executed and useful study. The sample size was good, recruitment and response rates excellent, well validated scales were used, the study was prospective and so designed to be able to show how pre operative anxiety and depression relates to patients' post operative pain experiences. The introduction of this paper is quite brief, however this may fit this journal format. I would question the remark that morbity for RP is low, psychological morbidity is low but sexual morbidity is common and persistent.
I have some comments about application of the data below for consideration.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

I think that some further consideration and more directed discussion of how health care providers can best respond to and use this data is needed. A good nurse-patient relationship is essential, but is not of itself a therapeutic strategy for lowering anxiety and depression. What is clear is that all cancer patients should be screened for anxiety/depression at diagnosis and during the treatment experience and then directed to an appropriate level of psychological care (see Hutchison, S. Steginga, S.K., Dunn, J. (2006) A tiered model of psychosocial intervention in cancer: Translating psychosocial care practice guidelines into action Psycho-Oncology, 15: 541-546.) Ideally for men who are planning to have RP this would occur before they are admitted for surgery.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No