Reviewer’s report

Title: Impact of symptoms on quality of life before and after diagnosis of coeliac disease: results from a UK population survey

Version: 1 Date: 9 February 2010

Reviewer: Robert P Anderson

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There is surprisingly little data to address the health impact and economics of clinical management practice in coeliac disease. The NICE guideline for coeliac disease was released in May 2009, it strongly advocates wide-ranging case finding utilizing serological tests and finds it to be cost-effective. NICE estimates that a QALY for clinical diagnosis of coeliac disease to be worth approximately £4500. The study by Gray and Papanicolas is a welcome addition to the literature quantifying the benefits of appropriate diagnosis of coeliac disease. Data collection in this field is difficult. Reliance upon retrospectively reported data is typical since very few researchers have access to data collected prospectively, and typically it is only Coeliac Society members, about 60% of those diagnosed in the UK.

Discretionary Revisions

1. p5 2nd paragraph RESULTS: Coeliac UK may be able to provide demographic data on their membership. Do the respondents to this survey reflect the general Coeliac UK membership in age, sex, and duration of membership?

2. P6 “Table 6 reports …”: Is there any information in the literature that measures the effect of retrospectively self-reported EQ-5D vs prospectively collected data?

3. P7 “Placing valuations on these EQ-5D …”: Does EQ-5D decline with age? If the EQ-5D increases with diagnosis of CD presumably the EQ-5D measures are compared against age-matched controls pre-diagnosis and the time respondents completed the survey?

4. P9 2nd paragraph DISCUSSION: Mention of the recent NICE Guidelines would be appropriate here, and mention of the QALY estimates that NICE have calculated; are they correct?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I am CEO, Director and substantial shareholder in Nexpep Pty Ltd, a biotech
developing a therapeutic and diagnostics for coeliac disease.
I am Founder and Chairman of the Board of the Coeliac Research Fund Ltd, a
not-for-profit that promotes awareness, diagnosis and research of coeliac
disease.