Reviewer's report

Title: Patient-provider communication in Medicare Part D beneficiaries with diabetes: a cross-sectional survey

Version: 1 Date: 12 March 2010

Reviewer: Jean Yoon

Reviewer's report:

Drug costs and out-of-pocket expenditures are increasingly important issues for seniors and Medicare, so this manuscript addresses a timely and significant topic.

Major revisions

1. Don’t think the motivation for looking specifically at race/ethnicity and plan (MAPD vs PDP) was described well. Didn’t see clear rationale from last paragraph on page 3 why authors chose to focus on these 2 factors. They seem unrelated and significance of these factors above others was not discussed.

2. Authors should consider explaining why minorities would have less communication about drug costs -- is it because minorities have worse communication with physicians overall? Is it because minorities have less health literacy?

3. Authors should consider explaining why the plan type might affect communication. Is it because patients choose drug plans based on their preference for low drug costs? Are there significant differences in out-of-pocket costs by plan?

4. Abstract, first paragraph, should state somewhere that the analysis is limited to beneficiaries with high drug expenditures, only those who reached the coverage gap, not all Part D beneficiaries.

5. Page 4, methods, how the sample was drawn was not clear. How were these plans selected? Was this a random sample based on the Part D plan utilization files? It’s not clear what population the sample represents. How does the sample differ from Medicare Part D beneficiaries overall?

Minor Revisions

6. Page 5, second paragraph, change multivariate to multiple logistic regression.

7. Several grammar and punctuation errors throughout (e.g. page 6, 4th line from bottom should be household not house hold).

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.