Reviewer's report

Title: Tinnitus treatment options: Online questionnaire of general practitioners and ENT physicians within Europe and the USA

Version: 2 Date: 24 August 2011

Reviewer: Dirk De Ridder

Reviewer's report:

Introduction
no comments

Methods
How representative is the study population of ENTs and GPs, in view of the small number of patients seen by the ENTs during the last 3 months? Are these really tinnitus treatment experienced physicians as stated in the manuscript? A definition of what is meant by a tinnitus treatment experienced physician is would be helpful.

It would therefore also be interesting to see a distribution (how many patients seen by each phycisian) of the data for each country and for all countries combined. this to exclude that a few GPs or ENTs are responsible for most of the data and thereby bias the results of the survey. In a similar way, is the large size of German responses not modulating the interpretation of the total data.

Are the translations of questionnaires validated by a backward forward technique considering the multiple languages involved? In other words is the meaning of the questions identical for each language?

Results
GPs and ENTS are always involved in referral and management. Since only GPs and ENTS were questioned, this might bias the results. Furthermore in some countries a patient can directly access neurologists of audiologists for his/her tinnitus bypassing ENTS or GPs whereas in other countries patients have no direct access to specialists. How is this accounted for?

Discussion
see last comment of results section

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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’