Reviewer’s report

Title: Delay in diagnosis of muscle disorders depends on the subspecialty of the initially consulted physician

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Reviewer: Debbie Ehrmann Feldman

Reviewer’s report:

The article is interesting and highlights trajectories of care in terms of symptoms to diagnosis for muscle disorders. I do not have some minor essential revisions that should be done.

1. In the third paragraph of the results (on page 5), the sentence beginning GPs immediately referred 17 of their patients to a diagnostic center. What is the meaning of a diagnostic center; does this mean that they are sent to a neurologist? Also what is the meaning of to another specialist? Is this the same as "other specialist" i.e. a non-neurologist. This sentence should be reworked so that it is more clear.

2) Page 5, bottom: I do not think that it is stepwise regression if there is backward elimination. I believe that stepwise implies a combination of both forward and backward methods.

3) Discussion, page 7. Please reference some of the statements: e.g. Men wait longer until consulting a physician and are more likely to present with more advanced disease.

4) Please explain how level of education is associated with recall (the authors state that to minimize recall bias they assessed the level of education). I am not certain that the two are related.

5) Given the vast amount of information that physicians need to know, do the authors believe that it is advisable to spend more time on these rare diseases? There may be other solutions (e.g. screening tools that could help; electronic resources, etc.).

6) No mention was made regarding waiting times to see a neurologist or any doctor. Is this a problem in Germany?

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

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.