Reviewer's report

Title: Predictors of dropout in the German disease management program for type 2 diabetes

Version: 1 Date: 29 May 2011

Reviewer: Elizabeth Lindsay

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions
These are editorial and predominantly related to sentence structure and punctuation:
Re: Predictors of dropout in the German disease management program for type 2 diabetes.

This manuscript describes a study of patients who were enrolled in a diabetes disease management program between 2004 and 2005. It addresses and important topic and includes an impressive number of patients. Patients were defined as dropouts if there was no document regarding their participation during the year 2007.

The research questions are well defined and appear appropriate, although I am not qualified to assess the statistical design or analysis.

The methodology appears to be appropriate and the logic sensible. The authors provide clear rationale for their decisions regarding how to deal with missing values and other factors related to excluding patients from the analysis.

I believe the detail regarding these issues may be the most valuable contribution of the manuscript and will be of most interest to others conducting this type of study.

The discussion and conclusions, including a summary of weaknesses of the study are well written and the authors provide reasonably good explanations for their findings with comparisons to other related studies. The findings may be difficult for program planners and administrators to apply since there are few consistent patterns that can be directly applied by program administrators. For example, there are indications that those who remain in the program are less healthy than the drop outs but on the other hand there are variables like advice to stop smoking and to make changes in nutrition that might indicate that the drop outs were more in need of this advice. The patterns related to age and employment status may be the most meaningful and most easily applied. The study provides a framework for thinking about these many factors that affect patient drop-out and this can help individual program managers to look at their own patient population and perhaps find some patterns that will enable tailoring to individual patient groups.
Minor essential revisions.

1. Abstract: Background......and why this understanding is critical for assessing...
Results startin line 2, use semicolon after were: region;retirement status; etc
Conclustions.....line 2...I suggest saying "are lower than expected compared to...."

2. Background In 4... are required, by law,...
In. 15 "have to submit at regular intervals....
In 19..."routine exams, as well as..."
In 33 "Secondly, to better understand the underlying reasons, we looked...."

3. Methods In 9 - punctuate list properly with colon and semi colans

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.