Reviewer's report

**Title:** Diabetes Care and service access among older Vietnamese with type 2 diabetes

**Version:** 2 Date: 29 August 2013

**Reviewer:** Mark Harris

**Reviewer's report:**

Diabetes care and service access among elderly Vietnamese with type 2 diabetes

This focus group study involving 15 Vietnamese participants with type 2 diabetes in Melbourne, Australia, sought to describe experiences living with diabetes and access to health care. The methods are well described and appropriate.

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

The introduction states that there is very limited research with this group in Australia. However, a number of studies on this group are not reported, such as: Swerissen et al Patient Educ & Couns 2012; Rose et al Diabetic Med 2012; Tran et al Asia Pac J of Pub Health 2013.

The results presented are very descriptive. It is surprising that so few cultural factors were found in terms of their conceptualisation of health (although "health is gold" which has a specific cultural meaning in the Vietnamese culture is referred to in one of the quotes). Similarly in terms of diet (eg concepts of "hot" and "cold" foods), physical activity (including taboos) body image (especially in males). What were the arrangements for food preparation? Who decided what was available and who got first choice? The relationship with doctors could also be analysed in more depth. For example what was the continuity of relationship? What were the interactions between traditional and western medical practices especially in self management? What were the kind of questions they would have liked to ask about referrals? Why did they not ask? Was there enough time to talk and ask questions?

The discussion identifies a number of the issues emerging from the findings and relates these to the literature well. However there were a number of questions left unanswered. For example why, when they were so interested in their health, was their diabetes control so poor? Were there negative implications of their concern about complications? In research in London, Greenhalgh and others have found patients became fatalistic and exhibited denial in the face a fear of amputation. In relation to patients expectations about access and information was there enough time in the consultations for this?

**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