Reviewer's report

Title: Predictors of Substance Misuse in Patients with Chronic Pain, A Prospective Cohort Study

Version: Date: 9 November 2005

Reviewer: David A Fiellin

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Specific remarks

Introduction
No comments.

Methods
Pg. 4, line 5. All patients were referred. Referral bias should be discussed as a limitation.
Pg. 4, line 9. This was a resource intensive team. Generalizability needs to be considered
Pg. 4, line 10 and 11. Were non-pharmacologic treatments considered, used?
Pg. 6, line 26. Define “regular basis”.

Results
Pg. 9, line 2. 196 participated, how many were referred?
Pg. 9, line 10. We still do not know the relative prevalence of misusers.

Pg. 11, line 1-6. The presentation on UTS + for cannabanoids is not warranted given that this did not remain in the multivariable model. This section should be deleted.

Pg. 12, line 7. The definition of “polysubstance abuse” should be avoided. This term should be reserved for drug users who are dependent on a number of different types of substances. Instead, multiple co-morbid diagnoses of Substance Abuse or Dependence (one for each class that the person is dependent on) should be given if appropriate. I do not believe the authors have enough information to make this determination.
The authors should provide details on the case management and an assessment of the potential impact of case management on the outcomes of interest (substance use disorders)?

Discussion
Pg. 12, line 19-21. The authors need to be cautious about their use of misuse and addiction. Throughout the manuscript they should stick to the DSM-IV terms of abuse and dependence given that these have operational definitions.
Pg. 14, line 9-11. The authors provide no detail in the manuscript that they have treated pain effectively and compassionately.
Pg. 14. The following limitations should be addressed:
No formal SCID or DSM-IV diagnoses for substance abuse or dependence were performed on patients.
The authors used a proprietary and non-validated definition of misuse and addiction.
The data on drug offenses and DUI are not usually available to clinicians. The monitoring may not have been performed frequently enough to assess substance use disorders including abuse.

**Conclusion**

Pg. 16, line 4-5. Provide references to other studies that provide reasonable estimates of prevalence.

**Tables**

No comments.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?**: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest**: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English**: Acceptable

**Statistical review**: No

**Declaration of competing interests**:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'