Reviewer's report

Title: Furthering patient adherence: A position paper of the International Expert Forum on Patient Adherence based on an Internet forum discussion

Version: 1 Date: 22 August 2007

Reviewer: Toke S. Barfod

Reviewer's report:

General:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to review this interesting and relevant paper.

Overall, I think the paper brings relevant information, but that it could be presented in a clearer way.

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

I believe we need some information about the analytic method. How were the data synthesized?

The results could be more thoroughly analysed. Perhaps we should not get the results presented as answers to questions, but as the result of a more thorough analysis of what the respondents think. As it is now, we several time get too much of the same kind of information, because participants have written similar statements to different questions. The results could also be presented in a more conceptual way, so that they were grouped into paragraphs and given individual headlines. If there was a consistency between the concepts in the entire text, it may also be easier to get an overview of the essential results. As it is now, the results seem to be a not fully digested summary of the respondent’s answers instead of a condensed and full analysis. And the results are presented as a massive block of text.

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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)

1) General:
   a. I believe the paper could be shortened a bit, and that it might gain in clarity during this process.

2) Abstract
   a. Background: “As the problem of patient non-adherence becomes bigger…” I was unaware that the problem becomes bigger. Are patients less adherent than
before?
b. Background: “The objective … to find out to what extent this agenda is considered relevant…” Is it not also the objective to find out the results? To find out about adherence?
c. Methods. Please give a word about analysis method.

3) Background:
a. “… in a wrong way” sounds paternalistic. It is not always “wrong” to do what you feel like instead of what others tell you to do.
b. “nasty” does not sound scientific.

4) Methods:
a. Participants: “To evade the danger that people… etc.” I do not see how this is a particular efficient method to get a broad perspective.
b. Procedure: “… ideas were synthesized” By who? How?

5) Results:
a. There are headlines and boxes. Please make it clear, if these boxes are the statements that respondents had to react to.
b. Sometimes you mention the number of respondents agreeing on a point, and sometimes you give no numbers. It would be nice to know, what criteria you use for choosing one or the other form of presentation.
c. Proposition 6 (Box): “The results indicate…” What results?
d. Prioritization of the propositions: Would be nice with a short review here of how the results were prioritized (could also be explained in a footnote to table 1 … at first one may think that the priority score may have been calculated by the authors from the proportion of those who agree and those who do not).

6) Discussion
a. Would be nice with a discussion about how we should interpret the discrepancy between the number of participants who “agree” and the priority score. Which one is more important?

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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