Reviewer’s report

Title: Prevalence and incidence density of chronic comorbidity in type 2 diabetes patients: an observational study

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Reviewer: Stewart Mercer

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting exploratory study of a large dataset collected from 4 practices in the Netherlands, and adds to our knowledge of comorbidity in diabetes. An important finding is the large amount of discordant comorbidity in diabetics.

My view though is that this paper as it stands does not warrant publication in this journal (which is high impact factor) but would be suitable for publication in BMC Endocrine or BMC Family Medicine.

With major revision it could be acceptable for this journal, see points below.

The paper is generally well-written but the English could be better in places, and could flow more easily.

The authors state in the methods and in the discussion that this was an exploratory study, and as such this should be stated in the title and the abstract.

The methods section claims that data collected in these 4 CMR practices are likely to be representative of primary care, but is the data likely to be nationally representative or not? The location of the 4 practices and their heterogeneity (eg in relation to SES of patients) should be explained further. It seems unlikely that 4 practices could represent a nationally representative sample.

Recent work by Barnett et al on the epidemiology of multimorbidity published in the Lancet this year should be cited.

The lack of control group is a weakness, which could easily be rectified, and I was unsure exactly why this ‘fell outside the scope of the study’ as stated in the discussion.

I was also very surprised that the exploration did not include age, gender, and SES. This could add greatly to the study.

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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