Reviewer’s report

Title: Pharmacist Intervention in the Prevention of Heart Failure for high-risk Elderly Patients in the Community

Version: 0 Date: 13 Sep 2015

Reviewer: Barry Palmer

Reviewer's report:

General Comments

The manuscript describes an uncontrolled cohort study of 103 patients with recent symptoms of heart failure and their response to targeted visits from pharmacists. Participants were visited every 3-4 months over what appears to have been a 6-7 month period. Measurements of hypertension, blood glucose, blood lipids and signs and symptoms of heart failure and medicinal compliance were taken at baseline and at follow-up visits. Heart failure symptomology, LDL-cholesterol and triglyceride levels were found to be significantly improved at latest visit, as was medication compliance.

* Reviewing the MS would be easier if the pages, not just the lines, were numbered.

* Some justification of the chosen study design would be appropriate.

A cross-over study design of medication only followed by POS might have been an ethically acceptable alternative? Some of the claims made in the Results and Conclusions would be much more robustly supported if a control arm was included in the study.

* Please include a statistical power calculation in the Methods section.

* What allowance for the influence of multiple statistical testing was made?

* If the "latest visits" did not all occur at approximately the same time interval after the baseline visit (this is not explicit in the Methods section), then perhaps a statistical analysis including time dependent variables is appropriate?

* Was the Questionnaire meant to be included as Supplementary Information?

Specific comments

Abstract
Methods/Line 2 and throughout
Elderly’s → elderly patients'

Results/Line 6
Morisky score → Morisky Medication Adherence Scale

Introduction
Page 1/Line 2
Heart Failure (HF) has… → Heart Failure (HF) is

Page 1/Line 4
United States… → United States of America

Page 1/Line 12
..that population.. → ..that the population..

Page 1/Line 16
..improved living standard. → …improved living standards.

Page 1/Line 24
… Heart Failure Society.. → …the Heart Failure Society..

Page 1/Lines 36-48
The sentence:
Moreover … community elderly.
Should be shortened, simplified or broken up.

Page 1/Line 50
Page 1/Line 52
…that pharmacy … → …that a pharmacy …

Page 2/Line 1
…in early… → …in the early…

Page 2/Line 29-38
references for Joint National Committee 7; Standard of Medical Care in Diabetes 2012; ATP III?
There are citations in the footnotes of Tables 1 & 3, but no corresponding references in the Reference list?
Page 2/Line 25
Delete "namely"

Page 3/Line 21-33
Delete "It is claimed in the product guideline that the "test strips are plasma referenced in line with the recommendations of the International Federation of
Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC)". 22 Hence, the test strips of the meter will illustrate results that are equivalent to the glucose concentration in plasma. As a result, Accu-Chek® Performa should be suitable for measurement of plasma glucose in the study."

Page 3/Line 35
…with CardioChek®… → …with a CardioChek®…

Page 3/Line 56
…corresponding to NYHA.. → …corresponding to the NYHA..
compliance by Morisky 8-item Medication Adherence Scale were performed at the first and the last visit.

→

compliance by the Morisky 8-item Medication Adherence Scale were performed at the first and last visit.

Page 4/Line 1 and Throughout (in relation top follow-up visits)

Latest or last?

Page 4/Line 4

..for assessment.. → ..for the assessment..

Results

Page 4/Line16

Don't start sentence with a numeral.

Page 4/Line 30-35

The grammar and tense of this sentence needs improving to provide unambiguous meaning.

In addition, it was found that number of subjects experienced 4 or more symptoms had a significant reduction by 15 (21.74%) (p=0.001, Table 2).

Page 4/Lines 42-50

How can it be claimed that intervention by the pharmacists made a difference, and not adherence to medication with or without a pharmacist, when there is no control (medication only) group?

Discussion

Page 5/Lines 47-57

The grammar and tense of this sentence needs improving to provide unambiguous meaning.
In addition, pharmacist role… → In addition, a/the? pharmacist role…

It cannot be claimed that intervention by the pharmacists made a difference, and not compliance with medication with or without a pharmacist, when there is no control (medication only, no-POS) group? Very likely it did, but comparison of with and without pharmacist intervention would confirm this.

The current heart failure questionnaire was developed for this study… → The current heart failure questionnaire developed for this study…

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published
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