Reviewer's report

Title: Analysis of influences on general practitioners' referral of obese patients in Australia: a qualitative study

Version: 2 Date: 15 February 2015

Reviewer: Matthias Wermeling

Reviewer's report:

Comments to the authors:
I have a couple of questions and comments, see below. I hope my comments will help you to improve the paper.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. Introduction/Discussion: I don't see a benefit in your application of the theory of planned behaviour. Either you write a few more sentences on this theory or you remove it altogether.

2. Methods section: The recruitment of patients section is not clear. You state that you identified thirty-two GPs. How did you do this?

3. Methods section: Purposive sampling is not clear. How did you estimate the socio-economic status of an area? Was socio-economic status the only factor in your sampling?

4. Methods section: Please explain, why you had evidence that saturation of themes was reached.

5. Methods section: You mention a framework to which emerging themes were applied. Please explain what this framework is. Was this framework pre-existing?

6. Results section: Considering that you have data from interviews with GPs, you should be aware that you are dealing with their perception. For example, when you write that referrals were initiated by GPs, you mention that this is their perception. The same is true when you write about "patient attitudes" (p. 9, line 184). GPs' (like anyone else) accounts of actions or persons are prone to error. In order to estimate who really initiate referral, we would need an observation.

7. Results section: Are the GPs' attitudes completely present in your paper? For example: What about their own level of competence in weight management. Does this also influence decisions to refer patients? Does gender influence the rate of referrals?

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. All sections need to be revised to address spelling and grammatical errors. Sometimes words are missing. Please be consistent in using "GPs", GPs' " or "GP"
2. Result section: You can attach numbers to your interview partners so that one could see that all GPs are represented equally in the quotations of your study.

3. Result section: In p. 12, line 255, you are using the word “correlation”. This term belongs to the world of quantitative research. Please use another word instead.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

**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.