Author’s response to reviews

Title: Communicating with gaps and tension: The treatment provision experiences of primary care doctors to patients with overactive bladder in Hong Kong

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Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for your kind consideration and review on my manuscript titled “Communicating with gaps and tension: The treatment provision experiences of primary care doctors to patients with overactive bladder in Hong Kong”.

This article investigates the treatment provision experiences to patients suffering from overactive bladder (OAB) among the private practice primary care doctors in Hong Kong. Illness experiences often subject to the interaction between health care providers and patients, hence both the health care providers and patients are the key players in accounting the whole treatment experience, and the voice of the health care providers should not be overlooked. Treatment experiences not only influence patients’ treatment satisfaction, compliance and thus treatment outcomes, but with lower patient satisfaction, the satisfaction and morale of health care providers is also affected, which in turn influences the treatment outcome. However, patients’ experiences have been occupying the main focus of research in past studies. The study on the treatment provision experiences and the voices of health care providers, though important, have been lacking in literature. There is a paucity of research about the treatment provision experiences of health care providers in Chinese communities, and even less is known about their treatment provision experiences to OAB patients. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate how the health care providers perceive about their treatment provision experiences to OAB patients in order to improve the experiences of both parties. As primary health care providers are the first contact of patients – including the patients suffering from OAB – hence the experiences of primary health care providers are critical since their experiences can in turn influence the patients’ incentives in seeking and conforming to the advice and treatment.

This study adopts a qualitative study approach to investigate the treatment provision experiences to OAB patients of primary health care doctors in Hong Kong. As my article shows, the participants experienced different challenges when they provided consultation to OAB patients. Lacking confidence in treating OAB patients, experiencing gaps in both treatment expectation
and communication with OAB patients, and feeling embarrassed when communicating with OAB patients were the common experiences encountered by the participants. The lack of knowledge and support in providing treatment to OAB patients, the tension between private practice doctors and patients in Hong Kong, the expectation on doctors’ professionalism and behaviors in Chinese communities, as well as the cultural perceptions on urinary diseases all made the treatment provision experiences challenging for the participants.

This article has not been published elsewhere, and is not under review and consideration by other journals.

As your Journal enjoys a high reputation in primary care studies, therefore, I sincerely hope that my article can contribute to your Journal. Thank you very much for your and reviewers’ kind consideration and comments!

Best regards,

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