Reviewer’s report

Title: Prevalence of anal symptoms in general practice: a prospective study

Version: 0 Date: 22 Feb 2017

Reviewer: Staffan Nilsson

Reviewer’s report:

Dear Editor,

I have reviewed the manuscript: FAMP-D-17-00007 Prevalence of anal symptoms in general practice: a prospective study.

The issue of prevalence of anal symptoms and the management of these patients in general practice is important and obviously research is needed.

I have some comments and questions to the authors:

I find the Result section a little hard to follow and have some specific comments.

Line 115: "Each doctor assessed 19 consecutive patients (range 15-29)." This sentence should be expressed clearer e.g. "The median number of patients assessed by each doctor was 19 (range 15-29). On line 114, the authors write that 1315 patients were preselected. On line 116, the number of preselected patients is 1255. It is unclear why the number of preselected patients is changed from 1315 to 1255.

Line 145, 7.4% out of 1061 does not result in the number 249. The total number of patients with diarrhea (78), constipation (127) and both (44) should be noted in the first column in Table 2. The number 1061 should also be given in the table legend accompanying Table 2. Then, line 145-148 can be omitted since the text is merely a repetition of what is already said in Table 2 and does not contribute to the Results section in any substantial way.

Treatments Line 203. I am not familiar with "venotonics" so please explain!

Paragraph: Proctologist's follow-up consultation

Line, 207, "Fifty-seven patients (34.9%) accepted a consultation with the referent proctologist." I am lost here, so please note the total number of patients that the 57 patients were a part of. Was it out of 166 patients with anal symptoms?
I cannot find anything about quality of life or discomfort in the Result section. These results are only being reported in the Discussion section. I think they should be in section Results section as well and reported more clearly. What was the grade of impact on life quality and discomfort on those consulting for anal symptoms, those being examined by the GPs and those not being examined. May be a table could contribute to clarity. This is important since the authors draw conclusions from the impact of anal symptoms on quality of life and the experienced discomfort from symptoms.

**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.

Yes

**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

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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