Reviewer’s report

Title: The Diagnostic Pathway of Parkinson's Disease: a Cross-Sectional Survey Study of Factors Influencing Patient Dissatisfaction

Version: 0 Date: 06 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Barbara Clyne

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper which addresses an important aspect of care - patients’ dissatisfaction with the diagnostic pathway for Parkinson's disease. The paper is well written and presented. However, I have a number of queries around the methodology, outlined below, which need to be addressed.

Background:

1. "Patients' experiences during the pathway to a diagnosis can influence long-term care." In what way? This sentence is unclear, is it their satisfaction with, engagement with etc?

Methods:

The authors highlight they have published the qualitative paper previously but some more detail is necessary in the description of the methods in this current paper.

2. Purposive sample of 52 essays was used. Based on what characteristics?

3. "The qualitative analysis results were used to create a format to examine the content of all essays. Details on the coding format are described in Additional file 1." In your content analysis, what was the coding agenda/rules for assigning satisfied or dissatisfied? "the overall feeling a patient expressed about the diagnostic pathway in his/her essay" isn't a specific definition and there are no further details in the appendix supplied. For instance, what if a participant expressed a mix of feelings - is that neutral?

4. Analysis is described as "multivariate logistic regression". This should be multivariable, the terms are often conflated. Multivariate describes analysis with more than one outcome variable. See: Hidalgo B, Goodman M. Multivariate or Multivariable Regression? American journal of public health. 2013;103(1):10.
5. A justification needs to be given for the inclusion of the covariates - based on literature or just what was available in the dataset?

6. Some of the categorical variables are problematic in the model. Particularly the "Experienced delay" variable as it has 5 levels and I suspect that is why you are reporting the very large OR of 38.78. Dummy variables may be more appropriate here.

Results & Discussion

7. The results will need to be reinterpreted in light fitting the model with dummy variables.

8. Table 3. should be labelled univariable, not Univariate.

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

No

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

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