Reviewer's report

Title: Interprofessional Collaboration in Diabetes Care: Perceptions of Family Physicians Practicing in or Not in a Primary Health Care Team

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Reviewer: Janos Sandor

Reviewer's report:

Introduction

1. The topic is of high importance.

2. Presentation of the background (international context and Canadian setting) is proper.

3. The contribution of the PCN to T2DM-PHC quality improvement is demonstrated properly.

4. Lack of knowledge on nature of collaboration within PCN is explained in the last paragraph of Background section

5. Research question is clearly defined

Methods

1. Study design and sampling clearly defined; proper to answer the study question

2. Setting is about the PCN in Canada - should be inserted into the Background (it is not about the applied methods)

3. Questionnaire (to collect outcome data) is not introduced properly: it investigates complex phenomenons without explaining the methodological details, and without referring any publication; the appropriateness of the questionnaire (and consequently the precision/validity of data collected) cannot be evaluated
4. Analysis: it is admitted that the reference group of non-PCN family physicians is heterogeneous in the respect of the inter-professional collaborations; it is not explained why is this reference group useful to answer the study question

5. Statistical approach is univariate which cannot describe the PCN-related effects on studied outcomes

Results

1. response rate was very low

2. It is not declared what was the response rate among PCNs and in non-PCNs, it is not shown whether selection bias was introduced or not

3. Comparing mean ages was carried out (probably) by t-test, but the name of test is not mentioned

4. the investigated groups differed significantly by size of community and by clinical practice organization - consequently, these factors are confounding for the study - consequently, the observed difference between PCN and non-PCN groups can be explained by the different size and organization characteristics of the practices - consequently, the observed statistical difference can not be used to answer the study question

5. some small p-values are written as p=0.000 instead of p<0.001

6. Figures should be converted into tables to make easier the reading and to diminishing the extent of the section

Discussion

1. Subheading could improve the readability

2. Validity problems from uncontrolled confounding with results are not mentioned at all
3. A declared main result "The study findings reveal that family physicians who are affiliated with a PCN do involve other health professionals in the care of patients with T2DM to a greater degree than family physicians who are not part a PCN." is almost trivial.

4. The second main result "Family physicians perceive that inter-professional teamwork enables them to delegate patient education to nurses and diabetes educators and the monitoring and adjustment of diabetic medications to pharmacists." could be a remarkable achievement of the study (but the corresponding validity is poor)

5. the limitation section dose not deal with the biases introduced into the study at all

Conclusions

1. The conclusive sentences are not supported by the study, because the validity of the results are questionable.

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.

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?
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