Reviewer’s report

Title: Perspective of healthy asymptomatic patients requesting general blood tests from their physicians: A qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 29 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Jessica Watson

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for this fascinating paper which I really enjoyed reading. It has important implications for family physicians.

Introduction was well written. I would add reference to the recent BMJ paper about rising pathology testing rates.(1) It might also be worth adding a reference to one or two of the key overdiagnosis papers?(2)

Methods: I would remove the information about the demographic characteristics of the sample and add this to the results section. Please add something about translation - as the interviews were conducted in Hebrew and the quotes were provided in English I assume someone translated these? At what stage was this done and by whom? Also how was the sample selected - was purposive sampling used to ensure a range of age and gender?

Results: The first paragraph of the results should give a brief summary of the demographics of the sample. I would also like to see a simple descriptive table 1 with details of the gender, age categories, practice type and location (rural/urban?) of the selected sample.

Discussion: The discussion raises many interesting points, but would be easier to follow with a clearer structure (with or without subheadings) as it is occasionally slightly rambling. I would expect the first paragraph to summarise the results (and I would suggest adding the important statement here 'Our study shows that many patients believe blood tests provide information about their health status. The accepted medical approach - that blood tests are unnecessary when a patient feels well - does not concur with patients' strong need to know what is going on inside their bodies.')

I would then like to see a clear paragraph on comparisons with literature, strengths and limitations, then implications and conclusions. In terms of limitations I suggest that additionally it should be noted that expectations of blood tests may be culturally bound, and that the perceptions of people in Israel may differ from other countries. Additionally, the fact that patients who were sampled had recently requested screening tests means that they were by definition, likely to have a stronger belief in screening blood tests. This means the views expressed may not reflect the views of the general population. The benefit of this approach however is that by sampling healthy people who requested blood tests we can better understand these requests.
One additional tiny point; the acronym HMO is not clear to me - please define clearly.


**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.

Yes

**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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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