Reviewer’s report

Title: The impact of diagnosis on health-related quality of life in people with coeliac disease: a UK population-based longitudinal perspective

Version: 1 Date: 24 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Carlo Catassi

Reviewer's report:

Authors of this study performed a mail survey on a large sample of patients affected with celiac disease (CD) to investigate issues related to the diagnosis (presenting symptoms and duration of disease) and their quality of life pre- and post-diagnosis using the EQ-5D instrument. Data were analyzed and compared with results from a similar survey conducted in 2006. Sixty-five percent of respondents reported at least 4 symptoms pre-diagnosis, a significant reduction by 13 percentage points compared to 2006. Pre-diagnosis mean duration of symptoms was 12.8 years, a non-significant reduction of 0.6 years compared to 2006. There was a significant improvement of 0.20 in quality of life from pre- (0.65) to post-diagnosis. Pre-diagnosis values were significantly higher by 0.09 than in 2006. Authors conclude that undiagnosed CD is associated with a substantial decrement in quality of life. Time to diagnosis has not significantly shortened over the decade 2006-2015, but symptoms are less severe when diagnosis occurs.

This is an interesting study analyzing demographical and clinical factors related to the diagnosis, course, and quality of life of a disease that has a deep impact on the daily life, particularly after the lifelong treatment with the gluten free diet has been started. The comparison of the 2015 with the 2006 survey offers an interesting opportunity to investigate changes of the investigated variables over time, and this is an original aspect of this study instead than a duplication of previously published data.

As such, this study is certainly interesting for the medical reader. There are some weaknesses of the study that are properly discussed by the authors. In my opinion the overall quality of the manuscript has improved following the changes suggested by previous referees, therefore I have no further criticisms.

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?
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Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Yes

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