Reviewer’s report

Title: Hemodialysis Patients’ Preferences for the Management of Anemia Associated With End-Stage Renal Disease

Version: 0 Date: 27 Feb 2017

Reviewer: Jane Schell

Reviewer's report:

Hauber et al submit a discrete choice experiment to examine hemodialysis patients' preferences for anemia management. This is an increasingly used methodology that has gained importance for measuring patient-centered approaches to disease management and treatment preferences. The writing quality is quite good and aims of the study are clearly outlined prior to the methods.

The main suggestions aim to improve the content, clarity and overall applicability (discussion section) of the findings.

Major comments:

1) Introduction: It is helpful to clarify the definition of patient centered care and shared decision making however it may be helpful to discuss its relevance to anemia management earlier in the paper. For instance, would suggest using the ICH-CAHPS survey relevance to the discussion section and move up introduction of anemia.

2) Methods: Discrete choice experiments are an uncommon methodology for nephrology readers. Would suggest clearly defining these methods early with clarification for terminology. For instance the authors refer to attributes and different levels line 57 page 5 but do not define these attributes and what is meant by different levels until later. Within the first paragraph the authors discuss out of pocket costs as an attribute but left me wondering what additional attributes there were.

3) Methods: More information is needed for the how the survey instrument was developed. First, please cite the relevant articles used to inform development. Next, how specifically did the patient focus group contribute? Was the focus group used to test predetermined levels or to generate attributes? It may be useful to include the interview guide for the focus groups in supplemental.

4) Can the authors discuss how the relative levels were chosen for each attribute were chosen
5) Can the authors discuss how the survey instrument was 'qualitatively pretested' in face to face interviews. Generally this would include psychometric testing to ensure the questions are understood and answer the questions the authors seek to ask.

6) Methods: line 22, page 9. Can you say more/define conditional relative importance of an attribute. The authors discuss later (bottom page 11). I would have appreciated this definition earlier when first discussed.

7) Results: Authors discuss a 'target sample of 200', was the study powered, if so can you include in methods

8) Results: Table 3 has a lot of information. I wonder if some of this demographic info is not critical to the study or could be moved to supplemental, such as 'following problems experienced b/c of kidney disease'. Perhaps the demographics pertaining to attributes could be pulled out into its own table?

9) Discussion: Suggest to the authors more discussion about how providers should incorporate the findings of this study into practice. What would a patient centered approach to anemia management look like?

10) Limitations: The authors should deliberately comment on the relatively small number of invited participants who accessed the survey and hypotheses about potential differences or missing perspectives.

**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.

Unable to assess

**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.
I recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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