Reviewer’s report

Title: The patient experience of pulmonary hypertension: a large cross-sectional study of UK patients

Version: 1 Date: 03 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Gerald Maarman

Reviewer's report:

Comments to authors

Background:

Line 54: Please correct this first sentence and write it in scientific "language". PH is a general/umbrella term used to describe the disease (pre and post-capillary PH). Although distinct from PAH, it does not "arise" from PAH or CTEPH. In fact, PAH and CTEPH are groups of PH as classified by ERS and ESC taskforce guidelines (group 1 and 4). PH does however arise from conditions like left heart disease, chronic thromboembolic disease, etc. So please correct this sentence accordingly.

Line 57: PH is defined as an elevated mean pulmonary artery pressure > 25 mm Hg (as diagnosed by right heart catheterization), not just "abnormal increases in pulmonary artery pressure".

Line 58: "impairment of right heart function" - Actually it is the impaired right heart function and right ventricular failure that causes the patients' demise.

Results:

Line 165: "impact on their relationships and family" - Was there any follow-up questions about how these relationships were impacted?

Line 183: How do you know it is a "delay" and not just the usual time it takes to confirm a correct/accurate PH diagnosis? Are there perhaps data on how long the average diagnosis takes in a particular hospital that you used to deem this a "delay" or was it just the patient's perception that diagnosis was delayed?
Line 186: This is a crucial finding, and could speak to why patients report later to healthcare facilities (it seems they don't see their symptoms as important). This is in line with the general understanding that most PH patients are diagnose late in the progress of the disease. This also speaks to the fact that more awareness is needed about PH and its symptoms or the importance of patient-health education. It would be nice to see more of this in the discussion section.

Line 188: This is very interesting, as making a PH diagnosis can be very lengthy process. However, I presume it can be quicker if the diagnosis is done with echocardiography. You might want to consider that the patient's understanding of the diagnosis-process (or lack thereof) can play role in how they perceive it.

Line 192: Maybe I am getting you wrong, but didn't you say that some patients were diagnosed at the first appointment? Then how can the time between diagnosis be the same?

Lines 199-204: Where does these data come from? Did you do voice recordings that were transcribed and used for qualitative data analyses? Or are these extracts/quotes anecdotal? Or was it part of the different surveys?

Line 200: "kept giving me asthma inhalers" - This is excellent information really. This can provide us with a deeper/better understanding of why patients are diagnosed so late in the disease progression. There certainly is a need for HCPs to be better trained in identifying shortness of breath as in important clinical sign of serious underlying conditions. It would be nice to see more of this in the discussion section.

Line 209: Apologize for my ignorance, but this seems a bit counterintuitive does it not? I mean, would you not rather expect that PH treatments would be a financial burden instead of "improving" their financial situation?

Overall: Tell us more of the usefulness of the data generated in the study, and what the impact can be on the field of PH. Add this to your discussion. Your conclusion is not sufficient, make it more impactful.
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?
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.

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 am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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