Reviewer's report

Title: The Impact of Health Literacy in the Care of Surgical Patients: A Qualitative Systematic Review

Version: 3 Date: 23 April 2015

Reviewer: Marcel T Twickler

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De Oliveria and colleagues wrote an interesting manuscript about the impact of health literate state in the medical practice of surgery. They pointed to valuable clinical conditions in which the health literate state was of importance in clinical judgment. As they stated several times in their manuscript, a lot of criticism could be delivered regarding analysis and small sample size. However, their message is clear and I am convinced that it should be heard.

A major remark that I wish to make is the structure of their manuscript. It may be helpful if they will divide their structure in preoperative, preoperative and postoperative intervals; and in those specific intervals the impact of individual health literate state in clinical outcome/effects. In this way clinicians find more easy their way in their manuscript. In addition it may help if they formulate opportunities for additional research at these specific moments.

I missed the topic "informed consent and health literate state" as a principal part in their manuscript. Perhaps they can make some more notes about (medico-legal) implications of a limited health literate state, medical information in relation to surgical interventions. Is there jurisprudence regarding this topic?

Minor revisions, but suitable for publication

If an editorial will be offered I will accept writing.