Reviewer’s report

Title: Awareness and practices regarding eye diseases among patients with diabetes: a cross sectional analysis of the CoDiab-VD cohort

Version: 0 Date: 08 May 2017

Reviewer: Chrysi Koliaki

Reviewer’s report:

In this paper, Konstantinidis et al. addressed the impact of patients' awareness regarding diabetic eye complications on their self-reported morbidity (prevalence of diabetes-related eye diseases), overall health status and quality of care measures. The authors performed exploratory subgroup analyses in a total of 323 patients with diabetes living in a high-income country (Switzerland, canton of Vaud) and tried to determine the most important parameter being strongly and independently associated with a high level of awareness by using a multivariate linear regression model. This parameter was found to be regular ophthalmologic examination (during the past two years). The main barriers to undergoing regular eye exams, as identified and reported by patients, comprised the absence of visual symptoms or complaints, the perceived good level of glycemic control and most importantly, the lack of recommendations from healthcare physicians to undergo an annual eye examination and the unawareness of screening strategies for diabetes-related eye disease.

This paper is well-written, provides a balanced discussion of its strengths and limitations, and addresses an interesting issue of preventive medicine and diabetology. It underscores the current lack of knowledge regarding screening practices/strategies among diabetic patients despite their living in a country of high socioeconomic level, and emphasizes the importance of regular (annual) eye examination by a specialized ophthalmologist in order to detect and prevent diabetes-related eye disease (diabetic retinopathy, cataract, glaucoma etc). The major contribution of this paper is that it highlights the need to increase awareness of patients with diabetes with regard to preventive screening strategies, mainly by communicating better the screening guidelines and stressing the importance of annual eye examination in order to improve outcomes and prevent ocular complications in susceptible diabetic patients.

Minor comments

1. The term knowledge score should be better replaced by the term awareness score.

2. In Table 1, remove the parentheses from the title, remove Mean and SD from the first row and leave only age, since all numbers for the different characteristics are comparable ranging between 316 and 323, there is no need to state the exact numbers in the first column because it becomes too crowded.

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.

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.

I am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests**
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal