Reviewer’s report

Title: Self-management strategies amongst Australian women with Endometriosis: a national online survey.

Version: 0 Date: 07 Aug 2018

Reviewer: Helen Hall

Reviewer's report:

Thank-you for the opportunity to review this manuscript. Endometriosis has a significant impact on women's lives and the authors are to be commended for illuminating some of the common self-help strategies. I do however have a number of concerns and hope that my feedback is helpful to the authors.

BACKGROUND
Although the aim of this survey was to investigate common forms of self-care for endometriosis, the background appears to focus on cannabis.

METHODS
Line 82: should be survey tool or questionnaire (survey is the method)
Line 88. The premise that alcohol and cannabis use are self-care strategies is controversial. I would assert that they are not.
There is insufficient information regarding the development of the questionnaire.
How did the researchers ensure the same person did not respond multiple times?
Some of the questions on the survey tool are questionable. For example…
On a scale from 0-10 (0 being totally ineffective and 10 being totally effective), how effective was alcohol in reducing your endometriosis related pelvic pain?
Being intoxicated may reduce a women's awareness of pain however is this really a self-care strategy? The author's need a clear definition that operationalises 'self-care' in the context of this study (and to give a rationale for including alcohol and cannabis).

RESULTS
How was the missing data managed?
Line 143: A number of the modalities listed are broad and likely to be interpreted differently by respondents. For example some women may consider a gentle walk 'exercise' while others view exercise as a cardio workout. It is difficult to assess the variable without more details.
Line 148: what type of medication?
Line 161: What is the rationale for combining yoga and pilates?
DISCUSSION
As the online questionnaire was made available via social media to more than 33,000 followers, it is difficult to assess how representative this group is. It would be helpful if the authors could situate their sample within the international research literature.
Line 167: The statement that … women with endometriosis often feel frustrated at the lack of effective medical treatments and therefore turn to self-management [20]’ fails to appreciate the use of self-care strategies as a means of empowerment that has allowed women to 'take control' of their management (a point identified in the reference the authors cited)
Line 186: Was diet used specifically as a self-management strategy for endometriosis?
Line 192: What is the hypothesised mechanism for this?
Line 209-210: What is 'Δ9'?
Line 213: What medication did respondents report on? It needs to be more specific. Does this relate only to analgesic? Of so what; opioids, anti-inflammatories…
Line 222; I don't think the limited references are sufficient to support the authors assertion that … cannabis may play an important role as both an adjunct analgesic and harm reduction agent. This is a controversial statement. Where is the evidence for this in this context of self-care for endometriosis?

CONCLUSIONS
There isn't sufficient evidence to conclude that cannabis '.. appears to be a promising treatment for endometriosis related pelvic pain..' However, access to medical cannabis in Australia is restricted to patients with certain medical conditions (not endometriosis), and use outside of these limits remains illegal.

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.
No

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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