Reviewer’s report

Title: "Decision-making capacity for research participation among addicted people: a crosssectional study"

Version: 0 Date: 27 Sep 2015

Reviewer: Irma Hein

Reviewer’s report:

The article addresses an interesting research question and presents interesting results. Some major concerns need to be addressed however.

1. Methods and Results sections need restructuring. Participants: please show a flow chart of eligible and included patients in the results section. The data on patient inclusion in the methods section are not consistent and at the wrong place. Procedures is far too long, please add a subheading Measures to describe the way the MacCAT-T was used. Page 8: please summarize the procedure and be clear about the hypothetical research. Please do not repeat the results presented in tables, double in the text.

2. Figure 2: because of selection of two different samples, they were significantly different on most of the baseline characteristics. For that reason, figure 2 makes no sense.

3. To my opinion, the key message of the article should be clarified, in a way that it expresses: Most of the people with SUD, excluding those with acute intoxication, withdrawal or cognitive deficits, possess decision-making capacity regarding research participation. In the background section, the authors might consider to add some information on possible pathological values that people with SUD may base their decision-making on (Charland), which does not only apply to healthcare decision-making.

Minor concerns:

4. page 5: the authors might add information on procedures of proxy decision-making in the case of incompetent patients.

5. page 6, participants: As it reads, participants can have comorbid psychiatric diagnoses. Can the authors clarify this? Page 15, discussion, refers to outcomes of GAF and CGI, which may be explained by comorbidity.

6. page 10: information on validity and reliability of MacCAT-CR is lacking. Also page 18: some authors (Kim, Hein) did examine cutoffs.

7. page 11: could the authors please clarify how the MacCAT interviews were reviewed? Was there a verbatim transcription? Line 11: was the binary decision based on the MacCAT-CR manual or on the MacCAT-T approach?
8. page 14, line 9-11: new data appear on probability of consenting, which have not been mentioned in the results section.

9. page 14, line 19-22: could the authors please clarify why they explain variability in decision-making competence by type and degree of SUD groups, while figure 1 shows no significant differences between groups.

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.

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

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