Reviewer’s report

Title: Autonomy and Couples’ Joint Decision-Making in Health Care

Version: 0 Date: 14 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Samia Hurst

Reviewer’s report:

This is a well articulated and quite thoroughly analyzed contribution on a clearly clinically relevant topic. The very clear teasing out of the forms of rightful and wrongful influences over personal decision-making would have almost been enough to recommend publication, and the authors provide clear practical distinctions in addition. Nevertheless, a few points would merit clarification or complements:

1) As a clinician I could not help asking myself how I would assess when a situation resembled different ones that the authors describe. A few words either to clarify this or to exclude it from the scope of the paper would be welcome.

2) Some of the aspects of shared decision-making within a couple are still a little vague:

   a) is there such a thing as free autonomous delegation of decisions to a partner? The authors sometimes seem to imply that there is (page 14), sometimes that there isn’t (page 4). My position would be that there is, but in any case I would urge them to be clearer on this point. And if there is such thing, then is it truly (as stated on page 14) ”less than the theoretical ideal”? Why?

   b) what is meant when the authors say (page 13) that the components of autonomy need to be present in the couple as a unit? Surely it is insufficient if only one partner demonstrates all components, but then what is meant by this?

   c) The third option on page 15 justifies lesser participation by some women on the grounds that respecting their own view of their role does actually respect their autonomy. This requires a little more argumentation. Situations that take away options also tend to take away expectations. Is autonomy really such a subjective entity and if so is there a limit to how much a situation can result in domination before it becomes too much?

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

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Not relevant to this manuscript

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

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