Reviewer’s report

Title: What do patients with unmet medical needs want? A qualitative study of patients’ views and experiences with expanded access to unapproved, investigational treatments in the Netherlands

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Reviewer: Kasper Raus

Reviewer's report:

I think this is an excellent paper on an interesting topic. It is an interesting qualitative study that provides insight into the reasoning and attitudes of patients with unmet needs.

My only remark would be that the paper is almost entirely descriptive and might perhaps benefit more from some ethical discussion. The discussion section of the paper is also particularly descriptive.

My second remark is that I was somewhat surprised with the conclusion of the paper. On page 34 the authors remark that "this study does suggest that raising awareness of those opportunities would not give rise to a significant increase in high expectations or 'false hope'". However, the paper describes the example of a respondent who sold her house in search of a cure. On page 27, the authors describe respondents who are willing to go a long way to buy investigational drugs. On page 33 that authors state that in the face of life threatening illness patients would be willing to take more risks, even at small change of medical benefit. To me this does seem to suggest that there might be high expectations and perhaps even false hope… They claim not to have high expectations, but their actions seem to suggest otherwise. I am curious what the authors would respond.

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?
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Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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No
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review? 
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Not relevant to this manuscript

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