Reviewer's report

Title: CoDiab-VD: protocol of a prospective population-based cohort study on diabetes care in Switzerland

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Reviewer: Miranda Schram

Reviewer's report:

Comments to the author

This manuscript describes a prospective cohort study in the canton of Vaud that aims to assess the impact of a regional program and to obtain a comprehensive picture of diabetes patients and their diabetes care. The manuscript is generally well written, the authors provide background on the study and sufficient details on the procedure that allow comparison or replication of their work. However, there are several weaknesses of the paper that should be considered.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) In the method section, the description of the extensive patients’ questionnaire is not well structured. Could the authors find a way to structure and clarify this section, as they did for example in the description of the treating physicians’ questionnaire? We would advise to allocate section headings to the different areas they identified. Moreover, the comprehensive description of answer categories could be moved to the supplemental materials.

2) The authors describe their study as a population-based cohort study. However, participation rates are low, out of the 1341 patients that were eligible for participation in 2011 and 2012, 519 patients participated in the study. Finally, patients data from the physician was available for 271 patients, which is 20.2% of the eligible patients. This raises serious questions whether this sample is population based, and whether the results of the study are generalizable to the average patient with diabetes living in the canton of Vaud.

3) The authors state that recruitment through community pharmacies results in a sample of patients that is probably more representative. However, characteristics of non-participants were not available. Therefore, it is difficult to make statements about representativeness of the sample. We would advise the authors to collect this information, or elaborate on the limitation the lack of this information means.

Other Minor Essential Revisions:

4) Methods, last sentence of the sixth paragraph; “Twelve patients with diabetes pre-tested the questionnaire.” – Could the authors elaborate on what happened with this pre-test?

5) Methods, eighth paragraph; Description of the development of the follow-up questionnaires; the process of development is not clear.
6) Discussion; “The number of patients recruited is below the sample size calculated.” We would like the authors to clarify and calculate whether the number of participants is still large enough to detect an absolute change of HbA1C of 0.5%.

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**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests