Reviewer’s report

Title: Barriers to diabetic foot care in a developing country with a high incidence of diabetes related amputations: an exploratory qualitative interview study

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Reviewer: Naomi N.D. Levitt

Reviewer’s report:

This exploratory qualitative study aimed to explore barriers to foot care, from the perspectives of health care professionals and patients in Barbados, country with a very high rate of diabetes related amputations. The interesting aspect related to how these two groups prioritise foot care in their respective contexts.

It is well written, the research question is both important and clearly defined, the necessary ethical considerations have been accounted for, the results are presented adequately and the interpretation of the data is well balanced. As mentioned below I was intrigued by some of the findings/suggestions.

I have a couple of minor comments that require responses and minor revision.

1. It would be helpful to provide some background as to which aspect of care the various cadres of health professionals in the clinic provide ie some description of current role delineation.

2. How were the 2 clinics selected – are they in any way similar to/ different from the other clinic on the island.

3. References should be given for the statement “This study complements previously published qualitative work on the diabetic foot, which has tended to focus on personal beliefs and behaviours.....”.

4. The major deficiency lies in the small number of patients interviewed. I understand that the sample was selected purposely but there is little doubt that the study would be strengthened by having a larger sample of patients (in the context of a qualitative study) in the continuum of no foot problems to those who have had an ulcer/amputation. This is addressed by the authors in the discussion and the use of the term exploratory in the title and aim.

4. I was surprised by the lack of emphasis on blood pressure and lipids as evidenced in the Dr interviews. Would the authors please expand on this in the discussion as this is contrary to current guidelines.

5. The most intriguing finding was that the “Patients’ focus on glucose control and numbers could also be adapted in helping them to understand the stages of diabetic foot disease and ‘at risk feet’ categories”. The authors do allude to the possibility of adding this to the “numbers that are relevant for patients. This is an interesting concept that requires further exploration- ie what are the most
relevant aspects of diabetes care for which numbers can be generated and at the same time remain meaningful and not overwhelming to patients in different health care settings, with differing levels of numeracy/or even those with high levels of numeracy.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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'