Reviewer’s report

Title: Health literacy enhanced intervention for inner-city African Americans with uncontrolled diabetes: A pilot study

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Reviewer: Susanne Brandstetter

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Review: Health literacy enhanced intervention for inner-city African Americans with uncontrolled diabetes: a pilot study

The aim of the manuscript was to describe the results of a pilot study on feasibility, acceptability and preliminary efficacy of a health literacy based intervention for African American with type 2 diabetes. The authors present interesting findings and the manuscript is well structured.

However, I have some points of criticisms:

Major:

The study presented in the manuscript is a pilot study. I would like to suggest to focus more on this study type and its specific aims and possibilities. I miss information on how this pilot study refers to a larger study. Is it planned to conduct a RCT, to perform a study with long-term follow-ups, with larger sample size etc.?

Will the decision for or against carrying out a larger study be informed by the results from the pilot study? What were your expectations/hypotheses? Were there any a-priori criteria for defining sufficient feasibility and acceptance, such as x% of participants completed the intervention etc.?

What did you learn from the pilot study for the main study? Are there any adaptations necessary? Are there any measures which could improve participation and reduce drop-outs?

What are your conclusions regarding power and sample size?

The description of patients who did not start the intervention is a crucial aspect of the feasibility of a study. I suggest to present sample characteristics (table 2) not only for the analytical sample but for all patients. Further, the description of non-participants and the comparison of participants with non-participants should be moved from the methods to the results section.
Minor:

The study assesses many outcomes. Which outcome was defined as the primary outcome?

"Newest Vital Sign" is a measurement instrument which is very short and easy to administer. However, I am not sure whether it is suitable for repeated measurements and for assessing change over (a relatively short period of) time. Maybe the improvements that were found in HL were due to memory effects? Is there any literature on the use of the NVS as an outcome measure? Is there data on sensitivity to change of the instrument?

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

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Quality of written English
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