Reviewer’s report

Title: The impact of the illness label ‘gout’ on illness and treatment perceptions in Māori (Indigenous New Zealanders)

Version: 0 Date: 16 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Ad A. Kaptein

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript reports on a fairly straightforward study about a highly relevant topic in rheumatology (and in medicine in general): perceptions of patients/respondents of symptoms, illness labels and self-management options, in addition to options for (bio)medical care. The study builds on earlier research by this research group. The study is innovative, has an adequate methodology, and the results are important for clinical interventions and future research in the area of illness perceptions and beliefs about treatment.

I only have a few comments.

One wonders whether one or two sentences could be added in the Introduction about the theory/theoretical model underlying the study. I am aware of how medical journals want Introductions to be written but it is important, in my view, for the rheumatology scientific and clinical community to be able to read just a bit about the solid theoretical underpinning of the current work. I'm not a native speaker of English but one wonders whether 'urate crystal arthritis' isn't an extremely difficult set of words (crystal ~ crystal meth? etc.). This issue might need some explanation, I feel. Any information on selection bias in the respondents? If 'gout' has such a high prevalence especially in Maori samples, those Maori that actually suffer from gout might not go to the shopping center?

'Gout' does figure in a couple of novels (in English): any suggestions about how novels (and films), and Maori 'folk beliefs' (and white NZ -ers') might be studied in order to examine and shape illness perceptions re gout?

One wonders whether in the Discussion some attention could be given to intervention studies (in other medical conditions than gout) that aim at changing illness perceptions, and associated changes in various categories of outcome.

A minor issue: in the manuscript the authors tend to use 'disease' and 'illness' as if they are synonymous. They are not, as the authors are very well aware.
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?
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Yes

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I am able to assess the statistics

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