Reviewer’s report

Title: Being a quantitative interviewer: qualitatively exploring interviewers' experiences in a longitudinal cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 31 October 2011

Reviewer: Bengt Svensson

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This study deals with an interesting and important topic. What kinds of demands’ are realistic to ask for when recruiting interviewers and what kind of experiences can they expect to meet in their work.

The article is well written and there are no problems to follow their methodology. The results are well described.

There are some revisions that could make it easier for the reader to get a clear picture of the study.

1. How many interviewers were involved during the POIS project? It is mentioned that 2856 persons participated in the study and they were interviewed three times each – that is 8568 interviews. That sounds like an impossible task for the nine interviewers who participated in the focus group. It is mentioned that some interviewers left the project quite early because of problems with participants “forgetfulness”. It would be helpful to know how many who were recruited and how many who fulfilled their tasks.

2. How were the interviewers recruited and what kind of background did they have? It would be interesting to get some idea about if they were students, social workers, nurses or people recruited through ordinary advertising in daily newspapers.

3. For a person unfamiliar with the ACC it is not easy to get an idea of what their criteria’s for acceptance are. From the description in the background section it appears to be rather serious injuries but from some of the citations in the result section it seems to be quite heterogeneous. There must be some criteria’s that should be fulfilled for getting help from ACC. A clearer description of the injury panorama that the interviewers met would be helpful to get.

4. The low number of informants is a shortcoming and makes the results limited to only represent the group investigated. This should be stated and discussed.

Recommendation: Publication with revisions. (according to guidance for reviewers it should be Major revisions). Since there are few reports covering this topic the paper deserves to be published. The quality of the interviews in a research project is always of high importance and need more attention.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests