Reviewer's report

Title: Qualitative Systematic Reviews of Treatment Burden in Stroke, Heart Failure and Diabetes - Methodological Challenges and Solutions.

Version: 2 Date: 30 July 2012

Reviewer: Alexander Clark

Reviewer's report:

This paper is well written and fairly reports some of the tensions in the qualitative literature. The search strategy is comprehensive and detailed, data extraction involved multiple people, and the synthesis steps were clear and theoretically based. The review also drew on theory.

Major revisions

The concept of treatment burden is loaded and not sufficiently explored in the paper - it assumes all caring activities are burdensome, which is not the case based on the perspectives of patients and families. More conceptual exploration and sophistication would be useful regarding the framing of the paper. Relevant theory and empirical work should be drawn on in this framing.

A clear definition of qualitative methods should be included - would this include for example open ended survey questions?

How was Normalization theory used? More detail of its key concepts and how these were drawn on are needed.

The discussion appears to go quite markedly beyond the results - clearer links between the results and discussion are needed. It is not immediately clear how the discussion was linked to the results.

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 declare that I have no competing interests'