Reviewer’s report

Title: An exploration of the influence of ethnic group composition on focus group discussions

Version: 2 Date: 11 July 2014

Reviewer: Angelique Ralph

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
- In the Abstract under results the phrase ‘appeared to be more comfortable’ is vague and requires clarification.
- Introduction: Does the interaction amongst focus group participants distinguish the method from one-to-one issues, or do you mean group interviews? There are many features that distinguish focus groups from one-to-one interviews.
- Introduction: The final section, titled ‘Homogeneity and heterogeneity’, should be placed in the Method section. A brief definition may suit the introduction but definitions and classification of groups in the present study is best placed in the method.
- Method: How were the participants recruited from the organisations?
- Method: It is unclear how the groups were designated. It appears that this was done purposively. However, this is written in the Results section of the Abstract rather than the method. This needs to be clarified in both the abstract and the main text.
- Data Analysis: Paragraph 5, the background to the themes explored deductively should be introduced in the ‘background’ section, as with the predictions being made. The same with the following paragraph. This belongs in the literature review.
- Findings: The third aim does not seem to be adequately addressed.
- Findings: The analysis could be strengthened by incorporating the themes from Table 1 more explicitly rather than focussing on the content of the stroke services.
- Table 2. Indicate what the numbers are referring to.
- Discussion: Again, the third aim does not seem to be adequately addressed.
- Discussion: Have the authors thought about the potential influences of social desirability or psychological phenomena such as Groupthink?

Minor Essential Revisions
- Findings: Rephrase the sentence ‘There were five more ethnically … Caribbean participants’
- Introduction: In the fourth paragraph, it is unclear that the authors are talking
about the present study. The link between service satisfaction and the present study needs to be clarified.

- Method: The term ‘sufficiently well’ is vague and needs clarification.

Discretionary Revisions

- Data Analysis; Paragraph 8, it is unclear what is meant by the transcript and researcher notes being 'explored'. Please clarify this.

- Title: The title could be more succinct.

- Data Analysis Paragraph 3, when referring to looking beyond the content at indicators of how comfortable participants were, can the authors clarify this or perhaps provide examples?

Minor issues not for publication

- The method section does not follow a logical flow, for example, the authors report the recruiting of the groups, then the running of the groups, then go back to the recruiting of the groups and sample size.

There are a lot of grammatical errors. I have highlighted some below, however, please edit the manuscript thoroughly.

- Abstract, Background, second paragraph: Change “participants’ “ to “participants”.
- Abstract, Results: Change 41 to Forty-one
- Background, Focus Groups, First paragraph: change ‘but’ to ‘but also’
- Background, Focus Groups, First paragraph: include page number for quotation.
- Method, first paragraph: change ‘experiences of’ to ‘experienced’

Methods, data analysis: Change “participants’ “ to “participants”.
- Findings, Paragraph 2: Insert table number

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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 I have no competing interests.