Reviewer's report

Title: Multicultural appearances of depression - a challenge for the general practitioner: a qualitative interview study

Version: 3 Date: 24 April 2009

Reviewer: John Furler

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I found this a really interesting paper, written in open, honest and transparent prose that was engaging.

I had a couple of comments

1. Focus groups as a method. My understanding of focus groups is not that they serve as an efficient way to conduct interviews with many participants at once, but they offer an opportunity to see in action the social production of knowledge (1). IE the interaction between the participants is a prime interest of focus group research. I don't think the authors have really used the groups in this way and it may be worth noting

2. I just wonder if the ambivalence and difficulties expressed by the GPs suggests on the one hand technical problems of practice (How do we struggle in a technical sense – resources, interprets etc- to fit the patients into the available forms of “patienthood” that we work with?) and on the other hand a genuine questioning of the underlying construct of depression as a socially produced form of patienthood (and with implications for the role of GPs in such a production process). Highlighting this dichotomy and what future research could do to help understand this better might be worth a sentence or two? Linked to that is the statement that we “need tools for multicultural psychiatric care” which suggest the authors primarily see this as the former problem rather than the latter. Again, may be worth clarifying their position and conclusions

1. Warr DJ. "It was fun... but we don't usually talk about these things": Analyzing Sociable Interaction in Focus Groups. Qualitative Inquiry. 2005 April 1, 2005;11(2):200-25.

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