Reviewer’s report

Title: Perceptions of Doctor-Nurse Collaborative Practices by Patients with Multimorbidity: A Qualitative Study

Version: 1 Date: 4 March 2010

Reviewer: Patricia Hill H Bailey

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?

# The authors are addressing a question that has received limited attention in the literature. More background information, however, regarding the specific nature of the collaborative practices between doctors and nurses within the settings included in their study population is necessary. For example, the authors do not describe the context of the three practice settings except to define “collaborative practice” as being “any intervention with a given patient involving at least one family doctor and one nurse in primary care.”

# In addition, there is no information regarding the education or experience of any of the practitioners or the existing role norms and/or expectations in these settings. Perhaps Boon, Verhoef, O’Hara and Findlay’s (2004) work would be helpful in delineating the collaborative contexts and representing the nature of the health care provider working relationships in these various settings.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well defined?

# The use of a qualitative methodology is appropriate for the question being asked. The methods section, however, requires clarification to allow the reader to audit the analysis process. This expanded section should include reference to the questions asked of the data and a description of the initial data codes, subsequent themes and the decisions related to the development of the final themes.

# Although the authors state that they developed case summaries and a ‘conceptual matrix’, these do not appear in the manuscript. The authors also do not discuss or illustrate how these processes informed their interpretation of the interview data.

3. Are the data sound?

# The initial information presented related to the “levels of experience of nurse-doctor collaboration” is unclear. What does “classify[ing] participants regarding their openness to collaboration” mean within the context of this qualitative study? Did the authors only use data from the 13 “receptive” participants?

# A thick description of the context in which this study occurred is required. Given
that the roles within these practice settings have not been presented, it was not possible to determine if the patients were simply describing traditional role conduct within the context of some institutionalized form of integrated practice.

# The themes identified by the authors are underdeveloped and overlapping. As presented, the limited data presented appear as patterns or categories rather than developed themes.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
# No feedback related to data deposition.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
# Integration of literature related to patient satisfaction and integrated practice models, precursors to this work, would strengthen both the background and discussion sections of this manuscript.
# A critical review of the available literature related to collaborative practices is required in the background and/or discussion section of this manuscript.
# Although the authors did refer to Shaw’s 2006 publication to justify the need for their study, they are remiss in not addressing her subsequent work published in 2008.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
# The authors indicate that although their study was conducted in particular settings with a specific group of patients, they suggest that their finding could be transferable. Failure to provide a description of the context of the provider collaboration settings and practices calls this claim into question.
# In addition, the authors do not adequately address that the transferability to other jurisdictions in Canada would be confounded by the absence of primary care nurse practitioners in the Quebec.
# The authors state that “various triangulation methods” have strengthened this research study. An explicit description of these triangulation methods, however, has not been provided in the manuscript.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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 that I have no competing interests' below.