Reviewer's report

Title: Facilitating professional liaison in collaborative care for depression in UK primary care; a qualitative study utilising Normalisation Process Theory

Version: 1 Date: 19 November 2013

Reviewer: Luciana Ballini

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to read a research paper that explores the application of the Normalization Process Theory in the interpretation of results from an implementation study.

Unfortunately, despite my personal interest in the topic, I have not found this paper very informative and I try to summarise my main reservations below.

Major compulsory revisions

1. Although the Authors provide a table with brief definitions of the NPT constructs, I doubt these would be sufficient for an audience who is not familiar with the analytical framework. A reader does not understand why the framework has been used, its supposed analytical added value and whether it worked or not.

2. Looking at the results, the impression is that some findings have been conveniently “fitted in” the model, and we do not know whether all findings were explained by the model and/or which findings were not explained by the model.

3. The ways the findings are reported are suggestive of a careful choice of the most relevant/appropriate quote. Some descriptive aggregation of results would have been useful and Authors seem to rely too much on single quotes. Moreover the quotes do not seem to be adequately commented

4. I found it very confusing that at times findings seem to relate to the intervention (Collaborative Care) and at other times seem to relate to the conduct of the trial (CADET). Maybe it would have been better to keep the issues clearly separate.

5. It seems a pity that the participation of patients has been excluded by the study.

Minor revisions

Some minor points on the research project:

- why were the GPs interviewed by telephone and not face-to-face like other participants? This seems to have affected the quality of the data

- there is a strong bias with participants having also the role of researchers, and I don't think this is just a limitation of the study, but risks to invalidate the data.
Although this research could represent an important example of a qualitative study on barriers and facilitators “nested” in an effectiveness randomised controlled trial, I think it would need major rewriting and more in depth analysis to be published.

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**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'

I have personally met one of the authors and I have contributed to the development of the NPM;.