Reviewer's report

**Title:** Assessing factors influencing return back to work after cholecystectomy: a qualitative research

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 12 May 2009

**Reviewer:** Kurt Svardsudd

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This is an interesting manuscript. I have only a few minor essential comments.

1. The notion “... we have to know all factors …” (page 3, line 4 from the bottom), “... to determine all factors ...”(page 4, line 4 from the top), “... retrieve all aspects ...” (page 4, line 4 from the bottom) keeps coming back in many places in the text. It is of course futile to even think “all” factors or aspects may be covered in only four focus groups. I suggest the authors change the text to something more moderate, like “a wide range” of factors or aspects or items.

2. Page 5, line 2: “Patients were selected randomly from ...”. This is a contradiction in terms. “Selection” means a non-random procedure as opposed to a random one. I suggest that the sentence is changed to “Patients were randomly sampled from ...”.

3. Page 5, paragraph 2: what is meant by “Physicians were invited ... randomly according to availability? Do the authors mean “A random sample of physicians was drawn and invited to participate according to availability”. If this interpretation is correct, what was the source for random sampling? A list of physicians or other register? Please specify.

4. Page 5, paragraph 2: the description of the physicians is a little bit confusing. In the first line it says that “Physician who come in contact with these patients ...” and in the last line “There were no relationships between participating patients and physicians”. If I get it right the authors mean “Physicians who come in contact with this type (or sort) of patients ...”. As I understand it these physicians were not physicians for these particular patients. The text should be clarified.

5. Page 6: the two questions are described as “the two main neutral questions” or “the two main questions”. In my opinion they are not very neutral for any of the parties. These questions are often called “opening questions”, since the intention is to open the discussions. Moreover, three of the questions are phrased as questions, whereas the first physician question is phrased more as an ordinary sentence. Please give the wording as it was used in the focus groups.

6. Page 6, last line of paragraph 4: “Consequently, another main question was posed”. Were there more than two questions, or do the authors mean “Consequently, the other main (opening?) question was posed”? 
7. Page 6, last paragraph: “… the sessions were taped …”. Were they audio or video taped? Please specify. It also says that the tapes were transcribed. Was the transcription verbatim or not? Please specify.

8. Page 7, paragraph 2, line 6: “Disagreement was solved by consensus meetings”. I do not think meetings can solve any disagreements, but possibly the persons who participate in the meetings. I suggest a wording something like “Disagreements were solved in consensus”. The same applies to the sentence two lines down (“… after agreement.”).

9. Page 7, three last lines. “… the importance of the separate items was assessed by determining the frequency …”. Frequency is no direct measure of importance, but may be used as a proxy for importance. I suggest that a sentence with this content be inserted in the text.

10. Results: the first six lines, and the second paragraph, are in my opinion not results but rather methodological issues, since the composition of the groups was based on the authors considerations rather than by the focus group members. The text would fit in nicely in page 5 (and a few repetitions would be avoided).

11. Page 11, paragraph 2: “In the (secondly important) …”. The authors probably mean “In the (secondly most important) …”. Two paragraphs further down: “took a lot of time” does not sound very professional. An alternative phrasing might be “Another important and time consuming issue (and all …”).

12. Tables 1 and 2: the tables would be easier to follow if the items were sorted in order of magnitude, for instance in Table 1 the top horizontal row would be Physical factors, Individually determined factors, Hospital related factors, and the lower row would contain Work related factors, Advice and home-information-Other.

12. Throughout the manuscript there is a mixture of tempi (present tense and past tense). In medical scientific writing past tense is usually used (you don’t find something, you found it). The tempi mix is especially prevalent in the Discussion section. I suggest the authors revise the text on this point.

13. The English language is in general fairly good, but I am convinced that the manuscript would benefit from a professional English language revision.

**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 that I have no competing interests