Reviewer's report


Version: 1 Date: 26 May 2010

Reviewer: Heather Tan

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Title: Characteristics of General Practice: What do senior citizens value? A qualitative study.
Berkelmans et al
Version: 26th May 2010
Reviewer: Dr Heather Tan
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General Comments
In view of the aging population in many countries and the push to maintain people in the care of the primary medical care system as long as possible the views of older people about GP services and offerings is an important area of investigation. However I think there are a number of issues that need addressing before it is ready for publication.

Abstract
(Minor essential) In the methods section please include the number of semi-structured interviews

Background
Paragraph 3 – last 2 sentences (Minor essential)
- Insert gap between 8-12 and Preferences
- Next sentence needs better grammatical construction e.g. ‘To be able to respond favourably to the expectations of older health care consumers it is necessary for GPs to understand……”

Methods
- End of first paragraph: (Minor essential). There are problems with making reference to as yet unpublished material as the reader has no way of referring to this. Unless the material submitted for publication is “in press” before this current article is accepted for publication then I think more information needs to be given about the search referred to and on what basis this particular topic list was selected.
- “Ethics approval was not required” – (Major essential). Is this really the case? If so I think for the benefit of an international audiences the relevant regulation which allows you to interview patients without ethics approval should be quoted.
This would not be possible in Australia.

- Near end of last paragraph in “Study Population” section (Minor essential): I presume (IADL).15 means the reference number for the GARS4 scale in 15. If so this needs to be recorded in square brackets i.e [15]

- “Data Collection section” (Minor essential): Appendix 1 is missing or at least did not down load with the transcript for review.

- “Analysis” section ((Major essential): the sentence “The analysis was conducted according to qualitative research methodology…..” is much too vague. There are many qualitative methodologies. Which one did you use? Why did you choose that one rather than others available?

- “Analysis” section (Major essential): You have listed the five most important steps in the frame work method. These would be much more meaningful if they were illustrated with an example from your data. In this way the reader would have a clear understanding of the process you utilised in analysing the data.

- “Analysis” section ((Major essential): What criteria did you use to classify the importance of product and service attributes into “most important” etc. the quote you give in the results mostly do not indicate the use of most important, important etc by the participants. It is important to the credibility of the study that you explain how you made decisions in this classification process.

Results

Discretionary: in some case you have indicated whether all participants or perhaps only 1 participant said…. However it would be interesting and informative to know numbers e.g (3) or (7) participants thought…. In cases where you have not indicated this.

Discussion

- Minor essential: the sentence beginning “Accessibility by phone…. Does not make sense. Please re-write.

- Major essential: The results from literature in Table 2 are not sufficiently well referenced. Each section of the information listed in the “literature” column of this table should show the number of the particular reference(s) which refer to this point.

- Discretionary: the discussion section would be more effectively arranged under the same headings as the results.

- “strengths and weaknesses” section (Minor essential): First line of paragraph 2 has a font size problem.

References (Minor essential)

- References numbers in the text should be in square brackets and not superscripted as at present

- Your unpublished article cannot be listed in the Reference list

- Do the reports e.g. references 1 and 2 have a web link. If so this must be cited.

I am willing for this reprot to be available on-line if this article is accepted for
publication.

**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