Reviewer's report

Title: Understanding of an evidence based consumer information on fall prevention in old age: a focus group study

Version: 1 Date: 14 October 2010

Reviewer: Aleksandra A Zecevic

Reviewer's report:

Understanding of an evidence based consumer information on fall prevention in old age: a focus group study

Thank you very much for the opportunity to review this interesting study report. The topic of knowledge translation and implementation of research finding in practice, especially in the area of falls prevention, is gaining significance internationally. From this perspective this article is of importance in its field.

The authors explored the understanding and acceptability of a brochure created using evidence-based patient and consumer information. In the article they describe elements used to evaluate acceptability and comprehensibility, assessed in focus groups with 40 community dwelling elders.

Although the text is written with sufficient clarity to understand described concepts, I would strongly recommend that a native English speaker with science background edits the paper. I attempted to highlight some language-related issues that need to be addressed, but help from a professional editor would be highly beneficial.

Major Compulsory Revisions

General Comments

Consider changing the title to: Understanding comprehensibility and acceptability of an evidence-based consumer information brochure on fall prevention in old age: a focus group study

For better understanding of the brochure and it's elements consider uploading it on some website and allowing future readers to access it.

Interviews and focus groups are not the same thing. Replace 'interviews' with 'focus group discussions' throughout the text.

In methods section clearly specify which qualitative methodology was used (e.g., phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, discourse analysis, action research...). Focus group is only a method (a tool) for data collection.

Results section: It seems that this section was organized per chapter of the brochure, where subheadings refer to different elements of FORM or how information in the brochure is presented (e.g., absolute risk in 1,000 persons, length of chapters, table, nomogram, pictogram) and CONTENT
(meta-information, case story, calculation of risk, practical advice). It is unclear
how subheadings in Results section relate to 25 themes identified though content
analysis. It would be useful to add a table with all 25 themes that emerged. It is
likely that some of these themes could be consolidated and their meaning
presented in more concise way.

Quotes in Results section are ‘attached’ at the end of each section. They should
be connected to the story to support findings in each theme. For example: “... as
one participant in the FG 5 clearly stated...”

Influence of the education background (p. 10, para 2) – It is unclear how was this
data analyzed? There were only 6 (15%) participants with university degree and
34 without. Was this taken into account? What correlation was used? Was there
statistically significant difference between two groups? How was it calculated?
This whole section seems to belong to the quantitative portion of the study (which
would make study design mixed methods!).

Conclusions require thorough editing and clarity. Pick 3 major messages from
this study and report them in a simple language.

Check and revise reference list. There are 10 references (Campbell; Cumming;
Elley; Freyhoff; Harward; Hendriks; Mensch; Muller; Sanger; Schoen) that are not
cited in text, and 7 references (see below) from the text that are not included in
the reference list. Translation of each original German title should be provided.

Revise tables (see comments below).

Comments Per-section

Abstract, paragraph 1: Pay attention to a mixture of past and present time

Abstract, paragraph 2: “a pilot guidance was used’, do you mean a pilot study?

Abstract, paragraph 3: When referring to the brochure that was evaluated, use
the full title such as the ‘EBPI brochure on falls prevention’, or the original title.

Abstract: Explain what does ‘[focus groups were] analysed analytically and
verbatim’ mean. Should it be ‘transcripts were prepared from audio tapes and
written verbatim, after which they were analysed using content analysis?

Background, paragraph 3: Provide definition and explain principles (you also
refer to these as criteria) of EBPI.

Background, page 3, paragraph 1: Reference Bunge 2010 is missing from
Reference list. Add.

Background, page 3, paragraph 2: By ‘consumers’ to you mean consumers of
health care or any consumer. Define how different they are from patients, or
delete.

Background, page 3, paragraph 2: Avoid general statements such as “However,
the majority of information accessible in brochures and www or orally
provided...”, be more specific.

Background, page 3, paragraph 4, sentence 2: “The consequences are well
documented.” Clarify, the consequences of what?
Background, paragraph 5: Distinguish between programs for falls vs. programs for injury (fracture) prevention.

Methods, page 4, paragraph 3: did you use purposeful sampling? If so please specify this in the first sentence.

Methods, page 4, paragraph 3: How were participants distinguished to be in a different social class? Add criteria used.

Methods, page 5, paragraph 3: From Data Collection section I got the impression that the participants only provided feedback on FORM and not the CONTENT of the brochure. Clarify when did participants receive the brochure (“first impression” tells me they saw it for the first time during the focus group)? If they received it earlier and had a chance to read it at their own pace (as some comments in Results section indicate) this should be described here.

Methods, page 5, paragraph 3: Provide more detail about the meaning of “1=very good” and “6=insufficient”. What is very good or insufficient (e.g., comprehensibility, presentation, understanding, colors, or content of the story)?

Methods, page 5, paragraph 4: It is unclear what you mean by “Content of the audiotapes was analytically ... transcribed”. Clarify or delete.

Methods, page 5, paragraph 4: Replace “Participants were anonymised” with “Names of participants were replaced with codes to assure anonymity”.

Methods, page 5, paragraph 4: Clarify what do you mean by “approbations and first categorisation”.

Methods, page 5, paragraph 5: Clarify – “based on the guidance...” from where or by who?

Methods, page 5, paragraph 5: MAXQDA 2007 is not in the reference list.

Methods, page 6, paragraph 1: Reword the sentence “The open coding was influenced...”

Methods, page 6, paragraph 1: Clarify what you mean by “lower level codes”.

Methods, page 6, paragraph 2: Consolidate this one-sentence paragraph with the previous one.

Results, page 6, paragraph 4: For a North American reader it is not easy to make a parallel between levels of education. For example where does “secondary modern school qualification” fit in? Consider explaining with more detail (in Table 2 also) or aligning better with the classification most frequently used such as: primary school, high school, college, university, postgraduate degree.

Results, page 6, paragraph 4: Replace: “and had a current net income about less than ...” with “and had a net income less than...”.

Results, page 6, paragraph 5: “In the following [add SECTION] we focus on those themes of high relevance for the international development of EBPI”. This is the first time authors indicate international aspect of their work. Additional explanation is needed. Provide compelling rational for presenting only a portion of study results (9 out of 25 themes).
Throughout Results section authors inform how many participants from how many focus groups agreed or disagreed with different statements. It is unclear why is this information (e.g., 12/3) important. Clarify or delete.

Results, page 6, paragraph 6: “...due to reading the whole brochure...”. In methods section, add an explanation when did the participants had a chance to read the whole brochure.

Results, page 7, paragraph 2: “Focus Group Interview (FGI)” – delete Interview, use acronym FG only. Apply this throughout the manuscript.

Results, page 7, paragraph 3: Define what “Meta-information” means.

Results, page 7, paragraph 3: Replace “detailedness” with “concerning a level of detail offered in the first chapter”.

Results, page 7, paragraph 4: Throughout this section the number of participants who contributed to the described evaluations is very small (1, 4, 1 of 40 participants). Authors should consider if these are exceptions of the rule or they adequately represent the full sample.

Results, page 8, paragraph 1: This whole paragraph needs re-wording and clarification.

Results, page 8, paragraph 5: The subtitle “Calculation of individual fall risk” actually talks about a table and a figure used to do the calculation. Clarify in the subtitle. Edit the paragraph.

Results, page 9, paragraph 1: If the brochure was not a practical guide what was its purpose? Explain this the first time brochure is mentioned in text.

Results, page 9, paragraph 3: Explain what “One participant asked if there are only men” mean and why is it important.

Discussion, page 10, paragraph 3: Consider revising the second sentence to read: Thus, the brochure was evaluated as acceptable buy healthy seniors living in community.

Discussion, page 10, paragraph 5: Re-word, clarify and simplify the second sentence in this paragraph.

Discussion, page 11, paragraph 1 and 2: Mazor, McDonald, Roye-Schaler and Finucane are not on the reference list. Add.

Discussion, page 11, paragraph 3: Revise this paragraph as you clarify analysis of the marks given by two groups.

Discussion, page 11, paragraph 4: Inherent limitations of qualitative research should be added. Sentences 6 and 7 should be clarified. It is unclear what you mean by “sample size does not permit conclusion of seniors’ preference” and “the investigators had no access to a group of seniors with academic background” (did not you have 15% of the group with university degeree?). Sentence 9 (“It is possible...”) is a what-if sentence and should be deleted.

Table 1:
Revise table caption to read: Chapters and Content of the Evidence Based
Patient Information Brochure on Risk of Accidental Falls
What are EBPI criteria. Add Note below the table and list them.
Clarify what is “NNT-Table”
Chapter 3 and 4, EBPI criteria – do you mean “written” instead of “verbal presentation of risk”
Explain why chapter 5 was not addressed by EBPI criteria. Without having the access to the brochure this is confusing.
Table 2:
Mean age (years)
Replace “Graduation” with “Education”
Replace “no” with “none”
Consider adding to “Current employment status AND SOURCE OF INCOME”
What is the difference between “worker” and “employee”?
Self-employed, delete “person”
Table 3:
Provide n for each focus group.
Indicate the scale again 1 = very good, 6 = insufficient; meaning that lower overall scores are better. (Do you have an explanation on why was FG 5 lenient and FGs 2 and 7 critical?)
Keep number of decimal places consistent (one or two) throughout the table.
Figure 1:
If this figure is adapted from the brochure you should provide the reference.

Major Edits
Replace ‘Accidental fall prevention’ with ‘Prevention of accidental falls’ throughout the text. Do the same for “accidental fall risk” (replace with ‘risk of accidental falls”).
Avoid using terms such as “however, obviously, apparently, few, some, rather positive”. Be specific.
Take out the term “school mark”. You are using Likert scale of 1-6 to assess understanding and acceptability of the brochure.
Replace ‘Independently community dwelling seniors’ with ‘Seniors living independently in a community’
When talking about educational background, specify that it is ‘the educational background of study participants’ (abstract, 1st paragraph)
Paragraphs should have at least 3 sentences. Consolidate short paragraphs with longer ones.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
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.