Reviewer's report

Title: Persons with dementia lost in the community: Is it wandering or something unique?

Version: 1 Date: 29 November 2010

Reviewer: louise Robinson

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This is an interesting paper exploring the antecedents and characteristics of episodes in which people with dementia get lost.

Minor essential revisions:

Summary: The first sentence needs clarification - my understanding of the literature is that the majority of people with dementia experience agitated behaviour during the moderate and severe stages of their illness. However I do not think the majority get lost in the community - if there are references to substantiate this, then they should be included - if not, then the wording should be changed to some people will get lost.

Background: Generally well written but as the comment above, it would be useful for the reader to have references on the incidence of wandering behaviour and what proportion of people then get lost. It would also be of useful context to incorporate references about the consequences of wandering to both patients and carers.

In the final paragraph, what is the evidence that is emerging that wandering and getting lost are conceptually different.

Results: Page 8 - re age range, please change very young to younger people with dementia - this term is misleading. otherwise the results are clearly presented.

Discussion: If we are talking about these 2 issues being conceptually different, it would be useful to include in the discussion section why this is important. At a practical level it is about the stress caused to carers and how they manage risk - there is no discussion of risk management in dementia and this would be very useful.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no competing interests.