Author's response to reviews

Title: An evaluative study of the benefits of participating in intergenerational playgroups in aged care for older people

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

This Cover Letter addresses the changes required for manuscript 5766451041162981 – An evaluative study of the benefits of participating in intergenerational playgroups in aged care for older people.

In accordance with the BioMed Central editorial policies the manuscript reporting adheres to the RATS guidelines for qualitative studies as follows:

1. **Relevance of study questions** – *The five research questions are explicitly stated in the manuscript, the questions developed are discussed and the questions purposes are linked to clinical practice and policy development related to offering intergenerational playgroups in aged care facilities.* These questions are detailed in the manuscript under the heading of **Research Questions**

2. **Appropriateness of qualitative methodology** - *Interviews were considered to be the most appropriate method of exploring study participants experiences and perceptions of the intergenerational playgroup which was the focus of this study.* The study design is described and justified under the heading - **The study design** in Methods.

3. **Transparency of procedures** – *A convenience sample of aged care residents and child carers, who were the participants in the intergeneration playgroup program being investigated in this project.* The intervention is detailed in the manuscript under the heading **The Intervention – the intergenerational playgroup program IPP** Therefore we considered it an appropriate sample. This is detailed in the manuscript under the heading of **Participants**
4. **Recruitment** – the recruitment process was carried out in an appropriate manner – where site staff identified those who participated in the intergenerational playgroup program to the researchers and then researchers invited all those identified to participate in this project. The recruitment process is detailed under the heading **Methods** under the subheading **Data Collection** the process was complex due to the nature of the participant population – children under 16 years old, older people with cognitive impairment and older people with English as a second language.

5. **Data collection** – was systematic and comprehensive and is detailed in the Methods section under the heading **Data Collection**. The research questions are detailed in the Methods section under the heading **Research Questions**. The study settings are in the Methods Section under the heading of **IPP sites**. End of data collection is justified and described in the Methods section under the heading **Data collection**. The characteristics of the study group are presented in the Methods section under the headings **Participants** and **Screening of aged care residents**.

6. **Role of researchers** – the researchers did not occupy dual roles they are both researchers in this project. The ethics of this project were discussed on each site between the researchers, with study participants, legal guardians and site staff as necessary thought out the duration of the study. The development of the research questions were discussed with a group of stake holders with interest in intergenerational play groups. This is detailed in the Methods section under the heading of **Research Questions**. Data collection and Data interpretation was carried out by the researchers independently and jointly reported in the Methods section under **Data analysis**. Both researchers attended playgroup sessions
independently and together at different times during this project, this was a work balance issue. The researchers critically examined their influence on data collection and interpretation throughout the project through discussions.

7. **Ethics** – Informed consent was sought from the University of Western Sydney Ethics Committee the approval number is identified under Ethical Considerations. All written material associated with this project carried the University of Western Sydney Ethics Committee approval number. In this project informed consent was obtained from every participant. Anonymity and confidentiality was discussed with every participant.

8. **Soundness of interpretive approach** – The analytic approach is described and justified in the Methods section under the heading **Data analysis**. The approach was appropriate because of the exploratory nature of this project. An indicator of quality is presented in the Method section under **Data analysis** where the description of how themes and meanings were derived is discussed. Alternative explanations were sort from within the data and have been presented in the interview data results. There were no negative/deviant cases we suggest this may have occurred because participants made a choice to attend the program that is reported on in this manuscript under **Methodological issues**. The quotes used are appropriate and effective because they are representative of the data collected in this study. Only one semi-quantification was used it is presented and discussed. The trustworthiness /reliability of the data and interpretations were strengthened through the independent examination of interview data for themes and meanings followed by the corroboration of the evidence reported under **Methodological issues**.
9. **Discussion and presentation** – The findings of this study are grounded in the theoretical framework for this study. The findings are supported by current literature while making a contribution to the body of literature. The findings are reported in **Methodological issues and Conclusions.** The limitations are explicitly stated under the heading **Limitations to the study.**

10. This manuscript has been written for a health science audience particularly those working with older people and people with dementia in aged care and diversional therapist and therapeutic recreation as it presents an innovative intervention which may be of benefit to the client population they serve.

Kind regards

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