Reviewer’s report

Title: Perceived needs and satisfaction with care in people with multiple sclerosis: a two-year prospective study

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Reviewer: Angus Forbes

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This study set out to examine the needs of people with MS through time and their satisfaction with care. The paper draws on some interesting conceptual notions of needs and satisfaction based on previous models. Unfortunately the study fails to grapple with what it actually measures. In my view this study has measured people’s satisfaction with a range of current treatment options rather than needs. The study is further weakened by the lack of independence from the service and service user in the data collection process. In addition to the sample being skewed toward people with early disease.

Some more specific points below:

Abstract: Should include some specific data on findings.

Introduction: While an argument is made for the examining health needs, care satisfaction just seems to be tagged on for no apparent reason. The authors need to make some linkage to these different areas and allude to evidence of how satisfied people with MS are with their care. On P4. the authors state that no studies have explored needs through time, in fact study reference (6) did undertake such an analysis.

Method: P6. can the authors give some indication of the reliability and validity of the questionnaire adapted for the study and how it was adapted. Methods section would be enhanced with a clear set of research questions or objectives.

Findings: Would be better organised is related to specific questions, such as what were the perceived needs, perceived needs through time, differences in needs by disease severity etc. The data seem jumbled between satisfaction with care and needs. I would like to see these better differentiated and much more detail on the needs as this is what the paper promised. Are these truly needs are service options.

Discussion: I think the core problem here is a lack of clarity between needs, treatment options and satisfaction. The discussion should consider different dimensions of need and what has actually been measured by this study, which I think is more about satisfaction with care rather than needs.

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.