Author's response to reviews

Title: Using intervention mapping (IM) to develop a self-management program for employees with a chronic disease in the Netherlands

Authors:

Sarah I Detaille (sarah.detaille@han.nl)
Joost WJ Van der Gulden (j.vanderGulden@elg.umcn.nl)
Josephine A Engels (josephine.engels@han.nl)
Yvonne F Heerkens (yvonne.heerkens@han.nl)
Frank JH Van Dijk (f.j.vandijk@amc.uva.nl)

Version: 8 Date: 29 April 2010

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

We thank you for the opportunity to resubmit our manuscript “Using intervention mapping (IM) to develop a self-management program for employees with a chronic disease in the Netherlands”. We would like to thank the editor and all the reviewers for their valuable comments. To facilitate the reviewing process, we have marked all the changes made in the text.

We are looking forward to your reaction.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Detaille, MA
SENECA
P.O.box 6960
6503 GL Nijmegen,
The Netherlands

Reviewer: Marie José Durand

Reviewer’s report:

Major revisions
Results: Although we understand that this manuscript only focus on the development and content of the program, the information on Step 5 and 6 is still insufficient. Besides from repeatedly mentioning that the results are still not available and presenting incomplete information, we would strongly suggest removing the paragraphs on step 5 and 6 in the results section (as mentioned in the last sentence of their method section, “the present paper focuses on the results of step one to four”). If not, the authors should add much more information so that readers can understand what was actually done.

We agree with the comments of the reviewer that the content of step 5 and 6 is still insufficient. Specially the information in step 5 regarding the implementation of the program. The authors have therefore thoroughly discussed this point of criticism and have reviewed and re-written the information in step 5 and 6 according to the implementation of the program and evaluation of the program in the context of the evaluation study (RCT). We have not chosen to delete these steps in the results as they give insight in the objectives and boundary conditions of the training in the context of the evaluation study. We hope that when taking into account the changes made, step 5 and 6 at present provides enough information for the readers.

When the results of the evaluation study are positive, the program will be implemented on a wider scale. For this wider use of the program a dissimination plan and an adapted evaluation plan (for instance to evaluate the vision of stakeholders) will be developed. These plans are not included in the present article (is indicated in the text).

Discussion: The discussion still needs some work. We understand that it now focuses only on IM but more details are needed to help the readers understands the advantages and inconveniences of such approach. For example, how long did the IM process take (we only know that it was time-consuming)? Were there any other difficulties or obstacles in the use of this approach? Also, we don’t understand the fourth paragraph of the discussion (the one starting with “A possible weakness of the use of IM to tailor interventions…”). To our knowledge, IM is an approach to help develop program. The authors should clarify what “know how” or “theoretical knowledge and experience” is needed. What does
“ASE model” refer too (in the third paragraph)? Finally, this section should also discuss the content of the program since it is part of the objective of this manuscript. For example, what is the validity of the program? Can the content be transferable to other settings or is limited only to a Dutch context (external validity)? Are there any prerequisites needed to offer the program?

We thank the reviewer for the valuable comments regarding the discussion. We have re-written the discussion and have added the discussion points mentioned by the reviewer. We have also added extra discussion points in the discussion.

Conclusion: The conclusion is limited to one sentence and could be improved by adding information on the future steps planned (i.e., step 5 and 6) as well as future studies needed. For example, based on their experience with IM, should the process of this approach be further studied, adapted? Also, we are not convinced that the authors can conclude that the IM approach was “useful”. “Useful” based on what? Maybe by adding more information on this approach in the discussion will help the readers understand why it is considered useful.

We agree with the comments of the reviewer that the information in the conclusion is limited. We have re-written the sentence why IM was found ‘useful’ in this study. Our experiences with IM have also been included in the discussion.

Minor revisions
Abstract: In the method section, the last sentence addresses only Step 1 of the intervention approach. No information on the other steps is presented. The authors should present the general IM steps followed. Also, in the conclusion, it is written that the “results will be available in 2010”. This contradicts some sentences in the manuscript to the fact that the evaluation study is not done yet.

The abstract has been re-written according to the comments of the reviewer.

Methods: In step 1, similar sentence are found in the results and methods sections. The methods section should present the selection criteria of participants and their rationale (e.g., why select three chronic diseases? ), where the participants were recruited, and how the results were analyzed, whereas the results section should present information on the participants and the prerequisites/factors found in the need assessment. Table 3: The last column refers more to themes or topics addressed in the program than “activities”.

The method section in step 1 and table 3 has been revised according to the comments of the reviewer.

Reviewer: Dee W Edington
Reviewer’s report:
Our comments are limited to the successful effort of the authors in clarifying the objectives, clearly stating that the work described in this manuscript is to adapt the intervention mapping process to chronic disease interventions. The manuscript is very clear and concise, although this is what we would have expected in the Methods section of an intervention study. We were not able to see the distinction when we read the original submission.

We have marked all the changes made in the text to facilitate the reviewing process.

Reviewer: Ludovic van Amelsvoort
Reviewer’s report:
After my previous comments, which have been dealt with in the revised manuscript, I have just one small remark regarding the abstract of the manuscript. The sentence in the abstract, results; ”...in order to prevent sick leave and work disability” is not supported by any section in the result section of the manuscript. So I would suggest to skip this part of the sentence in the abstract.

The abstract has been re-written according to the suggestions of the reviewer.