Reviewer's report

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

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Reviewer: Marie José Durand

Reviewer's report:

We congratulate the authors for the effort they have put into the revision of this manuscript. The background is much more concise and clear.

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.

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?

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.

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.

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”.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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.