Reviewer's report

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

Version: 8 Date: 14 May 2010

Reviewer: Marie José Durand

Reviewer's report:

Please find below some minor comments on the marked changes added by the authors.

Methods

Page 5 (step 1, 1st paragraph): The sentence “These investigations involve the application of behavioural determinants theories such as ....” is not very clear. How were these theories applied? Were they combined? Also, in step 2, it is written that the theory of planned behaviour was chosen. Why did the authors choose this theory compared to the other models?

Page 6 (step 3, 1st paragraph): What is the difference between “change theories” and “theoretical change methods”?

Page 7 (step 5, 2nd paragraph): This paragraph presents how they implemented the program and would seem more appropriate in the result section. In the method section, it would be more pertinent to describe how they chose the implementation strategies, how was the training plan developed, ...?

Results

Page 15 (2nd paragraph): When referring to “master trainer at Stanford University”, does that mean to be certified to offer the program? Also, what are the qualifications needed for the 2nd trainer that is not trained at Stanford University?

Page 17 (3rd paragraph): Just to make sure we understood correctly the last sentence of this paragraph: the data of the participants from the control group that also received the experimental intervention were analysed in the control group but not in the intervention group. Did the authors include a follow-up? If more than 8 months, could that bias the results?

Page 18 (3rd paragraph): Who was blinded to allocation? It seems that the participants knew in which group they were allocated.

Discussion

Page 19 (2nd paragraph) and page 20 (2nd paragraph): The discussion related with time consumption is contradictory. The authors started by saying that IM is a time-consuming process and that this was an important concern. In fact, it took
them only 3 months to adapt the intervention plan. Also, it would be interesting to specify the steps involved in the adaptation of the intervention (Steps 1 to 4?). We understand that the whole process including the implementation and evaluation could take much more than 3 months.

Page 19 (3rd paragraph): It is not clear how “social-cognitive theory and goal-setting theory” were used in this study. In the method section, it is written that the theory of planned behaviour was chosen (step 2).

Page 19 (4th paragraph): Last sentence, the authors suggest to screen the “IM checklist”. Do they refer to the six steps (figure 1)?

Discretionary revisions:
Table 3: In the last column, there are questions and topics. It would be more interesting to use a uniform format. For example, instead of “which situation cause stress, pain or fatigue at work?”, you can write “Situations causing stress, pain or fatigue at work”.

Page 17 (2nd paragraph): This paragraph is related with the recruitment of participants for the RCT. Could be moved to Step 6.

Page 18 (2nd paragraph): This paragraph describes the design and sample size of the program evaluation. Could be moved in the method section.

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.