Author's response to reviews

Title: A qualitative analysis of immigrant population health practices in the Girona Healthcare Region

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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Girona, 11 June 2010

Dear Sir:

Please find attached to this cover letter our answers to Reviewer of our manuscript ‘A qualitative analysis of immigrant population health practices in the Girona Healthcare Region’. We have answered point by point all the comments and modify our previous version.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Carme Saurina, PhD
(on behalf of the rest of authors)
Point-by-point description of the changes made

Reviewer Kenny Kwong

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The authors indicated that cultural mediators (page 4) in addition to medical staff and nurses who were responsible for choosing the participants. Please clarify who these cultural mediators were and what their roles in general in your healthcare system.

Thank you very much for your comment. We try to explain the figure of the cultural mediators in our healthcare system

Medical staff, nurses and particularly cultural mediators from the participating Basic Healthcare Areas were responsible for choosing the participants in the discussion groups. Cultural mediators in our country are professionals who collaborate in the care of social needs of immigrant communities and orient their action towards the prevention and resolution of individual conflicts, family or group that occur in the field of health, the education, social welfare and community living. Mediators must have good language skills in both languages, knowledge of the area of health as well as knowledge, skills and attitudes specific intercultural competence. …

2. On page 4, I am still unclear about the composition of participants (nineteen participants were selected (6 Moroccan women, 7 sub-Saharan women – Gambian – and 6 men, 2 natives, 2 from Morocco and 2 from Gambia). Please clarify the distribution of participant characteristics again based on their gender and the regions they are coming from.

Attending your request we write this paragraph in page 4 and in the abstract:

in the discussion groups (13 woman and 6 men) The regions were they are coming from the women were: 6 women from Morocco and 7 women from Gambia. Regions of origin from men were: 2 men from Morocco, 2 men from Gambia and 2 native men....

Please clarify if they actually participated in the study and not just they were “selected” to participate.

We change accordingly the text in the new version,

Finally, nineteen people participate in the discussion groups ...

3. Include the information on the number of participants (both patients and providers) and the number of discussion groups and interviews in the abstract (page 2).

We agree and included this comment in the abstract.

4. Appendix II provided a list of broad topics covered in in-depth interviews rather than interview questions. To address this concern, the authors can either provide a list of interview questions similar to Appendix 1 or delete Appendix II
and indicated these broad topics for in-depth interviews as part of the narrative on page 5 under Data gathering techniques. It is necessary to make reference to these appendices in your narrative (page5).

We prefer to delete the Appendix II as you suggest and to incorporate the broad topics for in-depth interviews as part of the narrative on page 5 under Data gathering techniques.

...resulting in a group discourse on the ideas, values and perceptions of a specific group (see the discussion guide in Appendix I)... with the native population. The broad topics for in-depth interviews were in order to know: the major impact on work by the arrival of immigrant; the perceived attitudes of the patients, the changes observed in recent times in the attitude of patients, the changes in attitude of professionals, the major differences in behaviour between the native and the immigrant population in order to detect de main differences in the quality of service and to gather suggestions for improvement. Both...

5. The authors mentioned that “the only limitations for participating (other than the categorisation criteria) were that subjects had not participated in the quantitative phase of the project and that women were mothers.” Please clarify why you think it’s a limitation. This appears to me more as the specific inclusion and exclusion criteria rather than limitations and it will be helpful that you provide brief rationales of using these criteria for your selection of participants.

We agree with your comment. In addition we change the paragraph in page 4 en this sense:

The only exclusion criteria to participate (other than the categorisation criteria) were that subjects had not participate in the quantitative phase of the project in order than they were not conditioned by the answers given on the questions of the quantitative phase of the project and that women were mothers as one of the main aim of the focus group for women was to ascertain their family situation and the situation about the children.