Author's response to reviews

Title: Diabetes in the workplace - diabetic's perceptions and experiences of managing their disease at work: a qualitative study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor

We have made the following changes following the review of our paper on 28 Nov 2012 by Ann Van Hecke;

1. Reviewer wrote:

The table could be more appropriate outlined by presenting percentages/categorising the occupational status

RESPONSE - As the table was a list of respondents by interview number which presented their individual characteristics - age, type of diabetes, type of treatment and their occupation it was difficult to see how percentages could be added to this. We have added percentages into the text on page 7 under the section on study design and sample to show how many people come from each occupational sector. We have also changed the table and put respondents together according to occupational sector to improve clarity. The occupational status of the respondents was in the table but we have separated the employment/occupational sector from individual jobs to improve clarity.

2. Reviewer comments - I meant to address the interviewer (rather than reviewer) - participant relationship in qualitative research. Addressing this topic is important as intersubjectivity is an important issue in interviews, also telephone interviews.

RESPONSE - the research team are highly experienced therefore automatically bracket off their own beliefs and preconceptions - however, to make this clear for the reader a sentence has been added to the top of page 9 as follows:

To ensure trustworthiness of the research the researchers own beliefs and pre-conceptions were suspended (bracketed) during interviewing and data analysis. In addition the third member of the research team acted as a ‘peer debriefer’ ensuring that the results were grounded in respondents reports[18].

3. Reviewer wrote
Although the authors stated that the literature informed all aspects of the study it still did not specified how the existing literature was used during the process of data collection and data analysis etc.

RESPONSE - We could not find any statement in our paper saying that the literature informed aspects of the study. However, to aid clarity we have modified a sentence (on page 8 second line under data analysis section) as follows:

The interviews, lasted between 30 and 40 minutes, were tape recorded and transcribed. The literature review had supported the development of the interview schedule, however, preliminary analysis of data was undertaken concurrently with data collection to identify and incorporate emerging themes and ensure that sufficient respondents were recruited to achieve data saturation in relation to their access to support for their diabetes in both in the workplace and the health services.

We feel that it is normal for literature to be reviewed to justify the need for the study but with qualitative work the findings are grounded in what the respondents say.