Reviewer’s report

Title: How Do Public Child Healthcare Professionals and Primary School Teachers Identify and Handle Child Abuse Cases? A Qualitative Study

Version: 1 Date: 4 July 2013

Reviewer: Sandra Thomas

Reviewer’s report:


Thank you for the opportunity to review this well-written and interesting manuscript. The research question is clearly evident in the title of the paper, and the rationale for choosing a qualitative research method is clear. The number of focus groups is adequate, and the data are clearly presented to the reader. A strength of the research is the use of an appropriate theoretical framework, the I-Change Model, which guided the data analysis.

The discussion section does include limitations.

Following are my recommendations for minor essential revisions:

1. Words should be inserted in the abstract, in the second sentence in the Methods section, to read: The interviews were audiorecorded, transcribed, and thematically analyzed…

2. I do not believe Table 1 is necessary, because the same information appears in the text.

3. Participants were told that study results would be used in development of a child abuse detection tool. Has this tool been developed by the authors?

4. Participants were assured of anonymity, but this is not possible in focus group research because participants see one another face to face. The wording should be changed to confidentiality.

5. The authors state that abuse reporting guidelines were to “come into effect by mid-2013.” It is already mid-2013, so the sentence should be edited to reflect the current situation.

6. I believe the titles of Tables 2, 3, and 4 should be modified for clarity, as follows:

   Table 2. Determinants of Awareness of Professionals, as categorized by the I-Change Model

   Table 3. Determinants of Motivation of Professionals, as categorized by the I-Change Model

   Table 4. Determinants of Action of Professionals, as categorized by the I-Change Model
Model