Reviewer's report

Title: Motivational interview interactions and the primary healthcare challenges presented by smokers with low motivation to stop smoking: a conversation analysis

Version: 1 Date: 9 July 2014

Reviewer: Agurtzane Mujika

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Major Compulsory Revisions

Explain in more depth and justify the use of conversation analysis as a method to assess fidelity to motivational interviewing (MI) in the context of available established methods such as MISC. In general terms much more clarity is needed in terms of what is analysed and how it is analysed. Initially, the MI interactions seem to be the objective of analysis. However, later on the authors propose the use of MI approach to analyze conversations.

The aim stated seemd to be of interest "to identify and analyze the structure of interactions between the smoker with low motivation to stop smoking and the PHC doctor or nurse during a motivational interview in a standard office visit". However, given that not all interviews analysed might have been conducted in keeping with the MI approach, it can't be ensured that what is identified and analysed is the structure of proper MI conversations. Because of this, and the reflections of the authors included in the results and discussion section regarding the interviews analysed ("in seven interviews (out of 11)all of them dominated by by problem-centred professional practice.... "the conversation goes forward but does not necessarily follow the principles of the motivational interview" ) this work might be more helpful in reinforcing the MI skills of the professionals involved in the sessions with the patients rather than as a scientifically sound contribution to the available knowledge.

More details would be necessary on the following: how the participant professionals were recruited, why some patients were provided with 2 MI sessions; the rationale for using video-recordings when only the verbal content of the meetings was to be analysed; more details on the analytical guide generated for the analysis (why this was done and how this links with the generating of analytical categories described in the results and discussion. In addition, providing the analytitical guide as an appendix or additional file would be helpful)

Minor Essential Revisions

Specifying he OR she in the findings section when this information is available in Table1.

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal
Quality of written English: Acceptable

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