Reviewer's report

Title: Health-related quality of life (HRQOL) in children and adolescents as an outcome criterion to evaluate family oriented support for young carers in Germany: an integrative review of the literature

Version: 4 Date: 20 October 2008

Reviewer: Martha Grootenhuis

Reviewer's report:

> 1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?: No, the manuscript gives the impression to read about young carers and family oriented supported. The manuscripts mostly is about the definition of QoL and HRQOL and measurement. The aims stated at the introduction are different from the ones described in the methods. Furthermore the aim about instruments is not met at all: not any detail about different measures is given.

> 2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?: NO the inclusion criteria of development and psychometric assessment are not outlined in detail.

> 3. Are the data sound? NO; although articles are summarized which describe detail, no insight in available instruments are given, which domains they assess, and why the KIDSCREEN is most applicable. Furthermore, domains which are important for young carers are described in the discussion, and no sound literature search has been done, nor qualitatively nor quantatively.

> 4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? NOt completely applicable because of review.

> 5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? NO, in the discussion the health care needs of young carers are described. I belief first an overview of literature about this group should be given, and questionnaires should be compared to the domains of this functioning-domains which need to be included.

> 6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? NO

> 7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? yes

> 8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? NO

> 9. Is the writing acceptable? yes

> - Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

> Reviewer's report

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- Major Compulsory Revisions
- the title of the manuscript is misleading: it suggests to find literature about young carers. This is not the case
- the abstract: the aims are not answered in the results section. because not any domain is described. Nor are the available instruments summarized. No summarization about the needs of career’s are given.
- I do understand the authors wish to select an instrument for their research. However, I am missing a literature review about the needs of young carers. That should have been the first step. Thereafter the domains of that literature search should be connected to the domains of HRQoL measures.
- in the method section it is stated as third: which instruments are availabe? Nothing is presented about different questionnaires. A review as presented like this should included based on several criteria all measures which are available --> the inclusion criteria are stated in the results section of the abstract.
- discussion: the young careres problems are suddenly presented in the discussion (table 1). Where does it come from? This needs to be the first aim of the study and a sound literature search should have been done be done. If no research is exsisting, they should have done a qualitatve research or have adressed this differently. One cannot do an intervention wihtout knowing the difficulties of these young carers in more details.
- discussion: the approval of Ulrike Ravens-Sieberer does not belong in a scientific manuscript
- in the conclusion the intervention goals are presented which do not belong to this mansuxript.

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.