Reviewer's report

Title: Patients’ views on responsibility for the management of musculoskeletal disorders - a qualitative study

Version: 2 Date: 8 May 2009

Reviewer: Robert Rowell

Reviewer's report:

None. This is a well written very interesting paper. I have a few recommendations.

1. The category "Collaborating responsibility" contains the subcategory "Prerequisites to manage needed." The category "Complying to recommendations (as a way of adopting responsibility)" has the subcategory "Provision of information, ergonomics, exercise needed." Both of these subcategories sound very similar. Both involve the responsibility of health care professionals and/or society to provide information. The first relates more to information about prognosis and diagnosis to manage the problem, but the problem cannot be managed without information about ergonomics, exercise, treatment, etc. "Provision of information, ergonomics, exercise needed" refers to preventing problems and "Provision of information, ergonomics, exercise needed" refers to treating problems that have already happened. Never-the-less there is overlap here in the theme of providing information. I believe the authors could do a better job of showing the distinction between the two subcategories, or collapse them into one subcategory of providing information.

2. The subcategory of "Parental need of support for healthy lifestyle" is very similar to the subcategory of "Provision of information, ergonomics, exercise needed." The authors could do a better job of explaining why these aren't both the same subcategory; one of Provision of information from sources such as parents, teachers, schools, and other role models.

3. These were all patients in outpatient physiotherapy clinics. Did they arrive their by self-selecting the care or were they referred there by another physician. This could represent a difference in their views about responsibility toward managing their musculoskeletal pain. This should be addressed in the limitations section.

4. The subcategory of Availability needed contains comments about both the availability of physicians due to bureaucracy and the empathy of health care providers. To me that seems like very different ideas. Consider changing this into 2 subcategories instead of 1.

5. In your conclusion you state that the paper has provided information on how
own responsibility needs to be met by others. That is true but not only by others but also by the patient himself or herself. The point of the paper is to explore patients views on responsibility for management of musculoskeletal conditions. Mention that in the conclusion.

6. Were you able to look for differences in views between patients of different ages? For example: Do elderly patients expect the doctor to take more responsibility for their health care and younger patients plan to take more responsibility themselves? If you were not able to analyze that, mention it in the limitations sections.

Discretionary Revisions

1. I recommend changing the name of a category. Change "Complying to recommenda
tions" to "Complying with recommendations."

2. Page 2 last line: change concept to concepts

3. Page 11 last line: change outwith to outside

4. Page 15: Paragraph beginning: Keep trying to get relief... The last line in that paragraph should be changed. The word "relieve" should change to "relief."

5. Page 18: I would recommend changing insusceptible to: ... other disorder triggering factors that are not preventable. I believe this is what you are trying to say. Insusceptible may correct but as I use that word, I wouldn't use it the way you have in the paper.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.