Reviewer’s report

Title: Experiencing and controlling time in everyday life with chronic widespread pain: a qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 17 July 2007

Reviewer: Rachael Gooberman-Hill

Reviewer’s report:

General
This manuscript provides an interesting description of the disruption of time experienced by people living with chronic widespread pain. The manuscript is well written, includes theoretical as well as empirical material and addresses an important question. The study design and data are sound and the research was conducted ethically. Although the study sample was small, it is adequate given the design of the study and the methods of analysis and interpretation.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The manuscript is ambitions and highlights important issues. However, because of this it falls betwixt and between a conventional sociological publication and a qualitative paper written for a clinical audience. I would suggest that for publication in this journal the authors should address more explicitly the needs of clinicians and health researchers. This could be achieved by expanding the discussion of the implications of their findings for pain management in both primary and secondary care, which is currently only brief. The abstract mentions primary care, but should discuss secondary care too.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

The authors are writing about agency and control over the uncertainties faced by people living with CWP. This is introduced in the background as an adjunct to Corbin’s concepts of time, and in the conclusion it is stated that controllable time can ‘stand alone’. Along with expanding their conclusions to highlight the clinical relevance of their work, the authors could also expand their conclusion to clarify more fully how their work develops Corbin’s ideas and how it relates to existing literature on control, uncertainty and time.

Identification of the community-based survey from which the participants were recruited would be helpful.

The readers may find it helpful if the authors clarify the meaning of ‘narrative
The description of IPA should include a brief description of what the process entails (coding/indexing etc.)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

It would be worth shortening results section 1 (typical days) with a view to making it snappier for the readers.

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I am co-applicant on a grant application with B.N. Ong, the second author of this manuscript. We will receive a decision regarding the success/failure of the grant application in the autumn (fall). Even if the grant is successful I will not receive any financial benefit from being a co-applicant on the grant.