Author's response to reviews

Title: Positive patient experiences in an Australian integrative oncology center

Authors:

Bonnie J Furzer Dr (bonnie.furzer@uwa.edu.au)
Anna S Petterson Dr (anna.petterson@solariscare.org.au)
Kemi E Wright Ms (kemi.wright@uwa.edu.au)
Karen E Wallman Dr (karen.wallman@uwa.edu.au)
Tim R Ackland Dr (tim.ackland@uwa.edu.au)
David JL Joske Dr (david.joske@health.wa.gov.au)

Version: 2  Date: 28 December 2013

Author's response to reviews:

December 28th 2013

REVISION letter for the manuscript entitled: “Positive patient experiences in an Australian integrative oncology center”

Dear Editor

Please find attached the reviewed submission to BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine entitled: “Positive patient experiences in an Australian integrative oncology center”.

We thank the reviewers and the editors for their comments and please find all suggestions and comments addressed below and in the revised manuscript.

Editorial comments:

• Ethics statement: Whilst being part of a broader study, all individual elements of this qualitative paper were covered by ethics approvals granted by the UWA Human Research Ethics Committee (RA/4/1/2113) and the Research Governance Unit and the Sir Charles Gairdner Group Human Research Ethics Committee (Ref. 2009-61). This has been reflected in the manuscript.

Reviewer’s Report 1:

• Five day research period: The study was conducted over a five-day period selected to represent a ‘normal’ week. A period was selected in conjunction with SolarisCare administrators and researchers that did not fall during public or school holidays, special events or therapist/volunteer absence.

Reviewer’s Report 2:

• Introduction summary paragraph was amended in-line with the recommendations of reviewer.

• Participant numbers, including those lost to follow-up are detailed on page 7,
paragraph 1. Numbers have been amended to also include percentages as suggested by reviewer.

• Evidence-informed relates to using the best available evidence from research, context and experience to inform decisions at SolarisCare including service provision and clinical delivery. In the absence of definitive evidence-based recommendations, clinical experiences and consensus from a variety of experienced health professionals are utilised.

• As detailed in the manuscript (page 8 – Questionnaire) the development on the questionnaire was based on previous studies utilising open-ended questions and previous patient interviews at SolarisCare. References have been added to the manuscript to reflect these previous studies. Following development of the test battery, pilot testing was carried out with SolarisCare volunteers for readability and test duration, follow by pilot testing on n=38 patients of varying ages and diagnosis. From this early work the questions were refined, reworked and condensed to reflect key investigative outcomes. As this study was exploratory formal validity and reliability statistics were not determined at this time based on statistical and research advice.

• In accordance with the journal style, comments from reviewers and in consultation with the extended research team pertinent revisions have been made to the results and discussion sections of the manuscripts including clarified referencing and structuring.

We attest that only original material is presented within this manuscript. The manuscript has not been previously published, is not under consideration elsewhere, nor will it be submitted to any other journal until which time BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine renders its final decision. This research was conducted as part of a larger study carried out at the University of Western Australia and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Western Australia, and was funded by the SolarisCare Foundation which had no role in the data collection, analysis or interpretation.

All authors have examined and agreed to the revised version of the manuscript. All the authors listed in the by-line have agreed to the by-line order and to submission of the manuscripts in this form. I have assumed responsibility for being the corresponding author, and keeping my co-authors informed of our progress through the editorial review process, the contents of the reviews, and any revisions made.

Sincerely

Dr Bonnie Furzer
School of Sport Science, Exercise & Health
University of Western Australia
bonnie.furzer@uwa.edu.au