Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of an inter-professional workshop to develop a psychosocial assessment and child-centred communication training programme for paediatricians in training

Version: 1 Date: 5 October 2004

Reviewer: Sandra van Dulmen

Reviewer's report:

General
The aim of the paper is to provide insight in the merits of an interprofessional workshop on developing training programmes in paediatrics. This is a relevant issue, related to finding common ground and exploring all kinds of potential obstacles and facilitators for developing and implementing new programmes. Another important issue that is being put forward in this paper is that one can only make sense of satisfaction when expectations and needs have been elicited before (p.15). There however are several points which need clarification.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
Throughout the paper, the literature references appear quite old and important literature is missing. For example, in the introduction it says that "Children are often not placed at the centre of the consultation". Although this is correct, it cannot be substantiated by two references from 1971 and 1984, as much have changed since then. Please also include a reference like that of Van Dulmen in Pediatrics, 1998 or from Tates et al, who describe historical changes in children's contribution to the medical visit. In addition, the content of the paper is not completely clear. Readers may be interested in learning about requisites for accepting and implementing new programmes, such as enthusiasm, intention-to-change, attitudes, motivations, cognitions and behavior. These topics are hardly described although they must have been a topic of discussion in the workshop. What is more, the added value of bringing together different professionals is not at all explained. If the final aim would be to perform psychosocial assessments by multidisciplinary teams, this interprofessional emphasis would be more understandable. Still, it would have been interesting to read how the different professionals valued the workshop. Important too is the fact that there are so many non-completed evaluations forms, especially among the nurses, and several people left the workshop before the last plenary session. This must have influenced the results of the workshop and the evaluation. The background of the study lacks clarity as well. At page 4. the papers starts of describing the prevalence of mental health disorders, whereas the last sentence of the first paragraph deals with giving information to children with cancer or in pain, which requires totally different communication and counseling skills, so please be clear about your focus. In the discussion, issues were raised which were not mentioned before, e.g. "the identification of individuals who are willing to trial the new programme with their trainees" and "it is important to include them (children and their families) in the development and evaluation of the training programme" (p.16) which was no objective of the workshop and makes one curious about the hidden agenda of the workshop leaders.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
Please provide more information about the action plan mentioned on page 7. Can the pre-evaluation form be correctly understood as a pre-workshop evaluation (heading on page 8) when nothing has occurred yet and therefore, cannot be evaluated?
In the section titled Description of workshop (p.6) content issues are mentioned, such as communication and interviewing skills. Are these content and no process issues?

The first sentence on p.17 ends abruptly.

Table 1. Group sessions 1 and 2 have the same title and content? Why not also include a column "Did not attend"? The file contains Figure 1 and 2 twice.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**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 limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

None