Author's response to reviews

Title: A qualitative study of professional and client perspectives on information flows and decision aid use.

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To: Editor BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making
28/02/2012
Please accept this revised paper titled “A qualitative study of professional and client perspectives on information flows and decision aid use” with a view to publication with your journal ‘Medical Informatics and Decision Making’.

We have addressed the reviewers’ final concerns as follows:

Karen Sepucha highlighted a typing error in paragraph three of the introduction which we have corrected.

We addressed Jenny Theodora T van der Steen minor essential revisions by:

• Highlighting the nature of the decision aid in the abstract. This now reads ‘This paper explores the meanings given by a diverse range of stakeholders to a decision aid aimed at helping carers of people in early to moderate stages of dementia (PWD) to select community based respite services.’

• We have highlighted the nature of the potentially distressing material on page 5 where we now say ‘The DA also contains vignettes describing carers’ experiences of increasing burden as their relative deteriorates, and brief targeted information about the trajectory of decline in dementia, which was considered information that was potentially stressful for carers.’ Further on page 11 we now say ‘An important element of realistic information for carers was that the DA reinforced the fact that dementia had a trajectory of decline and included stories about the increasing care demands this deterioration brings’.

• The figure 1 is uploaded.

• In the comments on study limitations on page 18 we now say ‘Firstly, the fact that we did not collect these data specifically to consider the issue of carer
positioning, nor directly observe carer/health professional interactions, meant that more in-depth information directly relating to on the issues raised in this paper was not elicited.’

We addressed van der Steen’s suggested discretionary revision of including some percentages from Chang et al.’s study. On page 6 we now say ‘However it is also associated with some anxiety [17,26], with Chang et al. [17] finding that 51% of carer respondents felt some anxiety when reading sections of their dementia information booklet, but only 11% felt it was too confronting.’ However, despite a careful reading of the introduction we did not feel able to decrease the size of the literature reviewed. We feel it is important that the reader follows the narrative about decision aids, carer decisions, dementia, and the contextual issues around decision aid use and that currently, this does flow well.

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1) That the authors have not entered into an agreement with the funding organization that has limited their ability to complete the research as planned and publish the results, and

2) That the authors have had full control of all the primary data.

Yours Sincerely
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