Reviewer’s report

Title: An analysis of online health information on schizophrenia or related conditions: a cross-sectional survey

Version: 1 Date: 30 April 2013

Reviewer: Nicola Reavley

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Essential revisions

Methods

P7 para 2. How were the random web pages chosen and how sure can we be that these random pages were adequately representative?

P9. Please include some more information on “the questions frequently generated by people with psychiatric disorders”. I see that there is a reference but it would be helpful to include details of such questions along with some information about how decisions about which questions to include were made.

It would also be useful to provide some assessment of inter-rater reliability and a discussion of how differences were resolved.

Minor revisions:

Introduction

The introduction jumps about a bit. It might be improved if the first part of para 2 and para 3 were better integrated. The beginnings of both those seem to cover similar territory. Could the authors say something specific about why internet health info is particularly useful for those with schizophrenia to link the first para with the rest of the introduction?

The authors could briefly expand on other studies of Finnish or Greek internet health information (mental health or, if not then more general information) to help set the scene for investigation of internet info on schizophrenia?

Results and Discussion

One difficulty with knowing whether the conclusions are appropriate to the data is in the definition of ‘inadequate’. I think the authors need to give us more idea of what an ‘adequate’ score is on some of these scales. Perhaps this could be done by comparing with other studies that have used similar scoring system, particularly if these have shown that the information is of reasonable quality (some for depression in English at least I believe).

As the authors note, there has been a growth in wikis in recent years, along with quite a bit of debate about the quality of the information on such sites. While they mention wikis in the discussion, there is no information on the quality of such sites as they compare to more ‘traditional’ sties. It would be interesting to know if these sites rated more or less highly on some of the scales used.
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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