Author's response to reviews

Title: Facilitators and barriers to implementing clinical care pathways

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Author's response to reviews: see over
11 November 2009

Editor-in-Chief
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Dear Review Committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to revise and resubmit our manuscript entitled, “Facilitators and barriers to implementing clinical care pathways,” (MS ID: 1601250195267281) for consideration as an article in The BMC Health Services Research Journal. We have carefully considered the reviewers’ comments and we have responded to each issue. Our responses are numbered in the order in which they appeared for each reviewer. Changes in the text are tracked in blue font.

This manuscript has not been published elsewhere, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. The final version of the manuscript, including the order of authors, has been approved by all authors. Three of the authors (M J, S E-L, and PM) received financial support from NHS London in conducting a literature review that supported the writing of this paper. All authors were staff of the London Mental Health Clinical Care Pathway Group of which GT was a co-chair. This article arose from discussion of work done in the group and in response to the recommendations in the report: Healthcare for London: A Framework for Action.

Thank you, in advance, for considering a revised manuscript for publication. Do not hesitate to contact me if you require additional information. I may be reached by mail, telephone, fax, and email listed below.

Sincerely,

Sara Evans-Lacko, Ph.D.

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Response to the Reviewers' Comments

Reviewer 1:

1) There is a missing space before reference 25 ....designed(25). on page 8
   Reference List

   Thank you for this point. We have now added a space before reference 25 on page 8.

2) Darzi a should be Darzi A

   We have now replaced Darzi a with Darzi A.

Reviewer 2:

1) The article is outmostly relevant and pleasant to read but to be much incisive an
   integration of information should be provided. The article is presented as a
   narrative review mentioning and describing some of the most important papers in
   the field. Nevertheless, as the article states: "This paper reviews the evidence on
   whether care pathways may ameliorate weaknesses in the implementation of
   guidelines and protocols by more specifically engaging with the clinical team at
   each stage of pathway development" one expects the methods for systematically
   reviewing the evidence being described in terms of search strategy, quality
   assessment, data extraction and summary of results.

   We thank the reviewer for these comments and for the suggestion to provide more
   methodological detail. We have now added further detail on the search and coding
   strategy we used on page 6. Specifically, we performed a search of the following
   Journals@Ovid Full Text June 2006, EBM CCTR, CDSR, DARE, ACP Journal Club, all
   2nd quarter 2007, using the search terms: clinical, care, critical, integrated in combination
   with pathway/s; also guidelines, protocol, implementation, evaluation, facilitate$, barriers
   combined with the former search terms. Inclusion criteria for this review were English
   speaking peer reviewed articles focusing on evaluated or synthesised interventions used
   to implement guidelines, protocols or pathways at a system level. Two researchers
   (SEL and MJ) coded facilitators and barriers discerned from the literature. We do not
   report the results from all articles; however this reviewing strategy ensured saturation of
   all types of facilitators and barriers reported in the literature

2) Providing the whole literature about implementation of clinical pathways is included, the
   useful table could provide references for the barriers as well as those for the facilitators.

   Thank you for this comment. We have now added the additional references for the
   barriers in figure 1.