Reviewer's report

Title: "Done more for me in a fortnight than anybody done in all me life." How welfare rights advice can help people cope with the practical demands of cancer.

Version: 1 Date: 16 April 2010

Reviewer: Ziv Amir

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This is an interesting article discussing issues that are of prime importance for patients but received little attention from researchers.

The manuscript covers a wide range of issues which should be addressed in a more organised form.

The title of this manuscript indicates that the aim of the study is to evaluate the impact of a new service on users' ability to cope with the practical demands of cancer, however, a significant part of it deals with both the impact of cancer diagnosis on finances and patients' struggles to obtain financial advice and benefit.

The nature of the services offered by this Welfare Right Advice Service is fairly well described, nevertheless, its actual impact on its users is not addressed strongly enough. In my view this is the main contribution that this paper can make.

Furthermore, there is previous evidence on the impact of cancer on finances and on patients' struggle with the benefits system. Therefore, I would recommend that this paper should be focused mainly on the impact of the service, as indicated in the title.

It would be much clearer if this section will be presented under the following headings: process measures (i.e. assistance in filling forms, enhance knowledge of entitlement, etc.) and outcome measures (i.e. income generation, lessening the impact of loss of earning, provision of safety net, etc.).

There is one quote indicating the impact of this service on the psychological state of those who used it (P. 17). This is a very important issue that unfortunately receive little attention in the article.

In summary, I think that this paper has a lot of interesting and important findings which are not presented appropriately.

In addition, there are a few more minor comments as follows:

Background:

On page 5 the authors say that "cancer disproportionately affects those who are already most likely to be financially disadvantaged". What about those who were well off before the diagnosis and experienced a significant reduction in their income? (e.g. self-employed without illness insurance).
Background to the service:
Authors need to provide information where the service is based. Is it based in the hospital, community, local authority etc?

Methods:
Despite the fact that this is a qualitative study, it would be interesting to know how many people were asked to participate in the study.

Results:
There is a need to provide justification for the 22 interviews; why they decided that this amount is sufficient? Saturation?

Discussion:
This chapter should be stronger with some implications for future interventions in this field.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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