Author's response to reviews

Title: Effect of an institutional development plan for user participation on professionals' knowledge, practice, and attitudes. A controlled study.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Mr. Declaro,

**MS:1842982688540052. 2nd resubmission and comments to reviewers.**

Effect of an institutional development plan for user participation on professionals' knowledge, practice, and attitudes. A controlled study.

We thank you for helpful feedback, and are grateful for the possibility to resubmit this manuscript. Our responses to the comments from the reviewers are as follows:

**Reviewer # 1**
I am satisfied the authors have made the changes I requested. Thanks very much for attending to these in detail. I am now comfortable this paper makes a significant contribution to the literature.

**Reviewer # 2**
This version of the manuscripts is considerably improved compared to the previous version. It is much more readable and has a better focus. However, I still do have some comments, mostly regarding the discussion section.

**Major Compulsory Revisions**
1. I still hold the opinion that the validation of the CPQ should be considered as a major limitation. Due to the fact that you did not perform factor analyses to test the subscales of the CPQ, you do not know if the CPQ measures the concepts you expect it to measure. Besides, the sensitivity of the CPQ for change over time is not known.

We have rewritten and added text to the Methods section and the Limitation part of the Discussion section to elaborate on this;

Methods, Outcome, last paragraph:

“The questions were organised into three thematic areas for this study: Twelve of the 30 questions measured professionals’ knowledge on user participation, seven measured practice, and 11 measured attitudes. These thematic areas were first identified by the 1st author through looking at each of the questions and grouping them. The grouping was
discussed in the research group to ensure face validity. No further validation was conducted.”

Discussion:

“The validation of the questionnaire and the thematic grouping of the questions into knowledge, practice, and attitudes is also a limitation. The thematic grouping was only validated by the researchers based on face validity. This is thus the only validation of whether the questions measure the proposed concepts. There was no further validation to clarify if there are questions that are misplaced or should be omitted in further studies. Furthermore, the sensitivity of the questionnaire to measure changes over time is not known.”

2. At page 18 you refer to challenges in evaluating user participation. You mention some methods for evaluation research, but it is not clear how this is related to your own study. Could you elaborate this?

We have decided to delete this paragraph since it only describes other possible methods to investigate user participation which are not related to the present study.

3. At page 19 some other instruments are mentioned for measuring user participation. But in my opinion this section could be deleted. ‘The CPQ has been modified into….. ‘until ‘would strengthen this research area’.

We agree with the reviewer and have deleted this paragraph.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. In the abstract (p.2) ‘object’ should be changed in ‘objective’

“Object” is changed to the correct “objective”.

2. P. 4 the last sentence of the first paragraph might be changed in ‘the professionals are thus vital in enhancing user participation…..’.

This is changed.

3. P. 5 the last sentence of the second paragraph might be changed in ‘There exists thus a lack of controlled studies…..’.

This is changed.

4. I would advise to choose another word for ‘exercising’ (P. 5, second sentence of the third paragraph).

We have changed “exercising” to “carrying out”.

Discretionary Revisions
1. The content of the implementation plan for enhancing user participation was based on knowledge of the project group members. I wonder if there has been performed a literature study before the project starts after effective interventions to enhance user involvement.
The group did not undertake a literature study to search for interventions. We have added the following to the Methods section, Intervention to clarify:

“The plan was thus based on clinical experience and knowledge, and the hospital administration's aim for the health services they provide.”

2. At page 16 it is stated that all employees are invited for this study, including administrative employees. Arguments for this choice are not given. I would be curious what happened with the results if you made subgroup analyses with only those who are directly working with patients. Have you done these subgroup analyses and what were the effects on the results?

In the Strengths and limitations section we have described that “all professionals were invited to investigate any changes in the organisation as a whole”.

6.8% (intervention group) and 5.3% (control group) of the professionals participating at baseline did not work with patients. At follow-up only 5.4% of participated in the intervention group and none in the control group did not work directly with patients. We did not conduct any subgroup analysis of those working directly with patients, mainly because this development plan was intended to impact the whole organisation (including all professionals), but also because the number of participants not working with patients was small.

Reviewer # 3
As a whole the manuscript has been improved and the authors have done a good job in responding to most of my comments.

1. I have read all the reports and the comments, and I still feel there should be an updated literature review on user involvement in mental health including work by for example; Storm, Davidson, Johannesens published in the journal Psychosis in 2010 and by Storm, Knudsen and Hausken in International Journal of Social Psychiatry in 2010.

In the first revision we added more literature (and several new references) to the Background section to broaden the literature review on user participation in mental health. In the current revision we have added the articles suggested by the reviewer in the Background section (underlined);

“Studies have shown that collaboration and partnership between service users and providers are essential in the process of participation, that such collaboration can be challenging, that participation is more common at the individual level than the organizational level (Storm, Hausken & Knudsen 2010), and that exploring professionals’ attitudes towards user participation is important.”

“Research reviews show, however, that there is a limited number of controlled (randomized and non-randomized) studies investigating effects [43]. One study, investigating an intervention program to enhance user participation among professionals in an inpatient setting, showed impact on organizational user participation patient collaboration, and carer involvement (Storm et al., 2010). Besides this, there exists a lack of controlled studies on the
effect on professionals from implementing an extensive and comprehensive development plan for enhancing user participation in health care organisations.”

We have also added one of Storm and colleagues’ studies in the Discussion section;

“Successful organisational changes also require a considerable length of time [53], and 16 months might be too short a period of time for any change to manifest, although Storm and colleagues showed impact on some aspects of user involvement only seven months after implementing their intervention program (Storm, Knudsen, Davidson, Hausken & Johannessen, 2010).”

2. I also believe that the authors have not responded adequately to all my comments. I do believe that it is of interest to comment on the baseline results as this study intends to measure change.

We added a sentence on this in the Results section in the first revision. In this revision we have moved the comment on the comparison of the baseline values between the intervention and control group to a new fourth paragraph in the beginning of the Result section to highlight this comment.

“Comparing the distribution in the intervention hospital and the control hospitals at baseline indicated no systematic differences between the groups (proportions at baseline given in table 3, analysis of baseline comparison not shown).”

3. I also think that the authors should elaborate more on the issue of measurement sensitivity. This is only mentioned, but not explained in the discussion.

See comment no. 1 to Reviewer 2.

We thank you again for the opportunity to resubmit our manuscript. We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

Marit By Rise /s/  Dr. Hilde Grimstad /s/

Dr. Marit Solbjor /s/  Dr. Aslak Steinsbekk /s/