Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 11 May 2011

Reviewer: Brenda Happell

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for the opportunity to review this manuscript. the topic is of considerable interest and relevance. I do have concerns with the writing style, I appreciate the authors are not native English speakers, but I found the manuscript a bit awkward and difficult to follow. I recommend the assistance of a proficient English speaking editor.

Major compulsory revisions
The abstract needs to be rewritten to more clearly convey the background and the study undertaken. It is currently quite vague, for example: 'various activities', provides no information about the type of interventions. Also the statement 'controlled studies' is insufficient, more information is needed.

The literature review requires further development, it is currently very limited I suggest you review the work of Happell and Happell and Roper, plus two recently published articles:


Methods:

Some information about the interventions and why they were chosen should be included in the text with reference to the table.

How the adapted questionnaire was piloted prior to use needs to be included.

Results:

the first paragraph should be moved to the methods section.

Discussion:

Some very useful discussion included here. More consideration needs to be given to organisational issues and attitudes of mental health professionals, again
I recommend the references listed above.

There needs to be a heading limitations where all of these issues are considered together. The non-matching of questionnaires over the two time periods is a major limitation that is not acknowledged. Although the issues around confidentiality are understood, it is possible that an entirely different sample completed the two surveys therefore making attempts to compare meaningless.

Conclusion

"no effect" should read "no significant effect".

Minor essential revisions:

p. 3: Users' should read users

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests