Reviewer's report

Title: Experiences of pharmacists involved in the delivery of a specialist asthma service in Australia

Version: 2 Date: 31 March 2012

Reviewer: William Doucette

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March 31, 2012

Good day:

Here are my comments on the manuscript entitled, “Experiences of pharmacists involved in the delivery of a specialist asthma service in Australia.” Overall, this is a well-written report of a qualitative study of pharmacists’ experiences during a study of asthma management service. The objective was stated and was achieved. The results are illustrated nicely with quotes. The Discussion is balanced, and put into context of previous work.

Major Compulsory Revisions
None

Minor Essential Revisions
1) While the methods are appropriate, more details on the data coding process should be added. For example, it is not clear if the coding was done independently, and then consensus was reached. Further, were a few cases used to develop a set of codes that were then used for all of the cases.

Discretionary Revisions
2) For readers who are not familiar with community pharmacies in Australia, it would be useful to add a paragraph briefly describing such pharmacy practices. For example, such variables as prescription volume, staffing levels, ownership, and typical/range of services offered would be informative.

3) It is not clear how dispersed geographically these pharmacies were. I wondered about peer support or recognition being an experience of the pharmacists. I know for past projects that we have encouraged the participating pharmacists to talk with each other as some type of a support group. I did not see anything about this in the focus group questions, but I imagine it may have occurred. If available, some findings and/or comment on this issue could be useful.

4) I was glad to see the recommendations for involving pharmacists in such studies. Based on the stated results and my own experience, I have a couple of suggestions for consideration by the authors. As part of the training it is useful to
distinguish training for service skills and knowledge (E.g. pathophysiology, therapeutics, communication) from training for the study components (E.g. human subject issues, data collection). Both components should be addressed. A second thought is to include assistance to the pharmacy practices to fit the new service into their operations. This might include discussion on staffing, work flow, use of appointments, physician relations, service area in the pharmacy. Most of these were mentioned in the findings, and repeatedly show up in studies of barriers to implementing new services in pharmacies.

**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 regarding this review.