Author’s response to reviews

Title: A four-year, systems-wide intervention promoting interprofessional collaboration

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Author’s response to reviews:

Editor’s Comments:
Your manuscript has now been peer reviewed and the comments are accessible in PDF format from the links below. Do let us know if you have any problems opening the files. Please note that as one of the original reviewers (Dr Reid) was unavailable to re-review your manuscript, we consulted a member of our Editorial Board on your response to him (reviewer 3). We ask that you please address the concerns he has raised and in particular in relation to major comment #3.

Authors’ Response:
We appreciate your support of our paper. These comments are very useful and have helped us to sharpen and strengthen the paper.

Editor’s Comments: Dr Flemming Jacobsen
The authors have sufficiently addressed the critique. I have no further comments.

Authors’ Response:
Thank you for reviewing our paper.

Editor’s Comments: Professor Ruairidh Milne for Dr Reid
1) The research questions are contained in the background and are inadequately defined, especially 1) & 3): "other activities" need expanded, and uncertainty about participants judging the study's goals.

Authors’ response: We appreciate these comments. The research questions have been more clearly defined, with the phrasing consistent with that in the
remainder of the paper.

My assessment: OK for aim 1 but aim 3 is little changed.

Authors' Response:

With aim 3 we addressed the issue by including considerably more detail in the Method where a new subsection on ‘Intervention projects and activities’ (including a new table) specifying the range of activities was added. More was also said about these in the Results and Discussion sections.

Editor's Comments:

2) The results need to be laid out more clearly and in relation to the aims. Most results emerge in the discussion.

Authors' response: In the Results section the results have now been specifically linked to the research aims. Figure 3 has been moved to the Results section from the Discussion section.

My assessment: OK.

Authors' Response:

No additional changes are required.

Editor's Comments:

3) Assumptions are made and judgemental comments such as "decline in attitudes".

Authors' response: This statement is a summary of the results found rather than a judgemental evaluation. We have rephrased it to read ‘less favourable attitudes’ rather than ‘decline’. We have also clarified that this statement refers to the four attitudinal subscales only. We go on to point out that overall the attitudes held were favourable. The respondents did not hold beliefs about the importance of doctor centrality.

The suggestion to use focus groups to examine the results is a good one. Unfortunately with the conclusion of the study it is now not possible to be implemented. We will consider its use in future projects.

My assessment: In the revised MS that I was sent, the change from 'decline' to 'less favourable' could not be seen. I also could find no reference to the idea of focus groups for future projects.

Authors' Response:

The comment ‘decline in attitudes’ (p.11) has been altered to ‘less favourable’.

We do not need to mention focus groups in the text. This as we have understood the reviewer’s point and our response was something we should factor in to future studies we do in this area rather than mention its absence in the text.

Editor's Comments:

4) The interventions are poorly defined and seem too wide ranging in relation to the responses (each respondent replied once on average).
Authors’ response: A table providing examples of interventions, and their focus, has now been included in the manuscript.
My assessment: OK

Authors’ Response:
No additional changes are required.

Editor’s Comments:
5) RIPLS. My assessment: OK.

Authors’ Response:
No additional changes are required.

Editor’s Comments:
6) Other define terms used such as "professionalism"
Authors’ response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. This term, a central construct in our paper, is defined by the literature analysis in the Background, and we have provided a brief, explicit definition to frame the paper.
My assessment: The only term defined in the paper is interprofessionalism. I could not find any other definitions developing the discussion.
My assessment: OK.

Authors’ Response:
We have now provided a definition of professionalism to complement our definition of the central construct, interprofessionalism. IPL, IPP and IPC are now appropriately framed in the first paragraph of the paper via these definitions.
In regard to the Discussion, no further changes are required.