Reviewer's report

Title: Investigating the purpose of an online discussion group for health professionals: a case example from forensic occupational therapy.

Version: 2 Date: 30 January 2013

Reviewer: Carolyn Murray

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the response to the first review of your paper and the subsequent reworking. There is an obvious improvement, but there are still some revisions required; in particular to the introduction and results sections.

Major compulsory revisions:
1. Results – the reworking of the themes is an improvement. However, I still have the following concerns:
   a. The ‘Implementing theory and policy’ sub-theme (currently under ‘seeking and giving advice’ theme) is too small and I do not see any reference to theory in the content. Suggest that this content fits better under ‘service development theme’ which is also about requesting advice. I think ‘service development’ should be a sub-theme of ‘seeking and giving advice’ theme which will bring your overall themes back to 5. Table 3 would need changing to reflect this change.
   b. Under ‘networking’ suggest removing sub-themes as they are not required and all the content fits nicely under the one heading.
   c. I notice that you have a sub-theme of ‘role of occupational therapists’ under the ‘seeking and giving advice’ theme AND you have a theme called ‘Defining the role of occupational therapists’. Please reconsider this duplicity and rework/rethink your theme and sub-theme headings and content. One seems to relate to giving and receiving advice about the role and the other seems to relate to lack of role definition and scope of practice. Could these be combined? Or, if not, the subtle differences need more clarity.
2. Limitations and recommendations: Please reword sentence 1 of paragraph 2 as it is difficult to follow. Also, it is unclear what you mean in the second to last sentence of same paragraph – please rework to improve clarity.
Minor essential revisions:
1. Abstract - Remove ‘clearly’ from the results section (not necessary)
2. Introduction: Overall, this reads in a much clearer and more transparent way. For the sentence in paragraph 2, I was concerned with the ‘either/or’ nature of the reasons for creating the online discussion group. Suggest reword to: “…forensic occupational therapists are often dispersed with limited numbers”.
3. Still in the introduction, paragraph 3, there is some repetition of above point. Suggest removal of “due to being small in number and geographically dispersed” from sentence 1 and reword sentence 2 & 3 to: “Considering it is an emerging area of practice, membership of the group was strong and it exceeded initial expectations. Given the decline in activity of the group, questions have arisen…”
4. Introduction, paragraph 3, last sentence: suggest removal of the musings about capitalising on the strengths of the current online discussion group in a quickly changing technological world; because you address this in the discussion (where it fits better)
5. Objectives statement at the end of the introduction – why is this a stand-alone sentence? With reworking of paragraph, could it flow as a concluding sentence to that paragraph? Also, suggest putting the time frame at the discussion group in the objectives statement (ie: from 2003 until 2011).
6. Methods: sentence 1 – for improved clarity suggest reword to “… was selected as a single case example representing a point of convergence”
7. Limitations and recommendations: In the first sentence, you have referred to utility of the discussion group. Suggest change to “purpose” so language is consistent (utility and purpose are different things).
8. Reference 3 – author name should be Farnworth

Discretionary Revisions: Nil

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

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