Reviewer’s report

Title: Cross-cultural perspective of family caregivers’ experiences in utilizing dementia services in Australia: a qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 25 September 2013

Reviewer: Jill Manthorpe

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for sending me this interesting paper to review. I think that it is a valuable addition to the caregiving literature by reflecting on the interactions of access and acceptability of dementia resources. I think the research team have collected valuable data from 4 groups which allow the reader to think about questions of migration status, variation between different groups and commonality of experience between all caregivers.

Major Compulsory revisions

However my main question to the research team is whether their linkage of this data about caregivers’ experiences really relates to the consumer directed care (CDC), ‘hook’ on which the paper is hung. In my views this seems a somewhat artificial hook and CDC is not explained sufficiently or critically analysed. There is no reference to the emerging literature from Australia on CDC or internationally (especially in the UK and US, and in the Netherlands where it is being truncated). The full implications of CDC are not explored and the data that are reported do not sufficiently address them.

Interestingly, the title makes no mention of CDC and my view is that the research stands alone in its valuable analysis of groups of caregivers. One further indication of the ‘lack of fit’ of this paper with CDC is the authors’ continual reference to this as a ‘reform package’. This sounds rather too much like jargon; it might be better presented as a ‘system change’ with none of the judgements inherent in the word ‘reform’. Importantly some of the reporting of findings/results drifts off to discussion (e.g. end page 12, end of findings section on page 23) about CDC without clear linkages and the discussion needs to be brought together.

This point applies to the abstract which is clear, although the date of the interviews should be included. However the conclusion suggests that CaLD groups need to be prepared for CDC rather than CDC needing to be more attuned to CaLD and other diversities. The authors might like to reconsider this.

Similarly, if the focus on CDC is to be maintained there needs to be stronger background about the implications of CDC for minority ethnic groups. These have been considered in the UK and USA. They paint a mixed picture, to my reading, of the benefits of choice but also the risk of undermining provision such
as ethno- focused day care centres that offer minority group services or outreach.

CDC has many nuances. Overall my recommendation would be to revise this paper to focus on the valuable data it contains and to enhance the discussion around the data rather than speculation.

Minor Essential

There are some minor presentation points to be addressed. Personally I don’t like the term PWD; ‘centred respite’ is also unclear to international readers.

The limitations of the paper are well expressed in that the settings produced potential bias. However, a further limitation is the lack of inclusion of non CaLD groups, meaning that some caregivers’ expressions of frustration and abandonment might have been shared by non-CaLD groups.

Discretionary Revisions

I would further recommend that the authors mention their thanks to the participants in the interviews/focus groups in the Acknowledgements as well as the study funders.

**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’