Reviewer’s report

Title: Searching for ‘Practical’ Resources to support Patient and Family Engagement in Healthcare Decisions: A Scoping Review

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Reviewer: Anne Marie Plass

Reviewer’s report:

This paper addresses the increasing problem of today’s (Western) world, that of health care systems changing into patient centered systems, in which patients are supposed to be responsible for their own health, and to make their own health decisions. Though this is a good change in itself, not all patients, nor care-providers, are up to this now. Moreover, not all constructs that go with patient-centered healthcare are clearly defined. The current paper aimed to look into the literature (peer reviewed and grey) to get more clarity about patient centered care and the topics involved in patient centeredness, especially patient engagement and how to engage patients. Moreover, the need for a ‘resource kit’ consisting of tools, and skills and knowledge needed to stimulate patient and family engagement was identified, whereas it is not clear how to develop such a toolkit.

Major concerns

Though interesting, and adding to the current literature, I have some serious concerns about the scientific quality of the paper. First, the research question is vague and very/too broad described. Due to this an answer cannot be formulated in the discussion and conclusion section of the paper. Second, the methodology used is unclear and lacks a sound scientifically (transparent) description of how the study was carried out. It is unclear why papers were in- or excluded. No clear criteria were being described, nor was the rating procedure clarified. The authors just mention that articles were selected 'if deemed relevant' to the project. This is by far insufficient to claim any scientific method used. Moreover, no inter-reviewer procedure to discuss the papers chosen, was described. Last, seven key findings were presented, some based on arguments with a literature reference, others lacking a reference, but it remains completely unclear on the basis of what these key findings were chosen and why. Maybe a sound scientific method has been used to carry out the literature search, but this has not been described in the paper. Therefore this paper cannot be classified as scientific paper. In sum, my impression is to better categorize the current paper as a report, summing up existing literature concerning the various aspects of patient engagement. In order to be considered for publication in any peer reviewed journal, at least a sound scientific methodology should be presented.

Additional remarks:

1. An abstract is missing
2. (p2) skills, knowledge, tools and resources could fill ANY resource kit.. What are specific problems encountered. Where are we looking for and why????
3. The methodology paragraph starts with what belongs to the introduction paragraph.
4. STARs are highly unappealing, can be anything
5. (p4) Unclear of only English literature was included or other languages as well
6. The rating procedure was not described
7. Why a paper was classified relevant remains a complete mystery..
8. (p5) Once again: 74/193 articles/ items were deemed relevant. Please indicate why and based on what
9. On p6 the authors state in the last paragraph that defining patient engagement is confusing and hardly possible, whereas they presented a clear definition in the introduction paragraph of the paper.
10. Whereas on p6 patient engagement was said to be confusing, on p7 the authors state that it is meaningfull and successful…
11. After stating that patient engagement is confusing, it is an open door to conclude that stakeholders differ in their explanation of what patient engagement is/ consists of.
12. P8 Interventions are mentioned, it would be nice to know what these interventions are.
13. Topics and themes come out of the blue, it would be nice to justify the use of these based on literature

I hope hat the authors will be able to sharpen the research question, afterwards they will be able to answer the question making use of a valid scientific method to do so. They now possess a lot of literature they already categorized, so they for sure will succeed in re-writing this paper in a way it can be considered for publication.

Good luck!

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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'