Reviewer's report

**Title:** What does it mean to engage consumers and communities in health care? A scoping meta-review

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 13 August 2013

**Reviewer:** Ineke van der Wulp

**Reviewer's report:**

The authors conducted an extensive search in the literature with the aim to clarify the definition of CCE and related concepts, its effects and challenges. My comments are outlined below. I hope they will be helpful in revising the manuscript.

Major compulsory revisions:

#Method

'Search terms included key phrases identified in an initial scan of the literature...' Can the authors provide more information on this initial scan?

'Meta reviews are feasible when there are adequate systematic reviews on a topic. In this study it was deemed feasible and appropriate to undertake a scoping review of existing systematic reviews on CCE in health care'. Can the authors provide more detailed information on how they came to this decision (concerning feasibility and appropriateness)?

'Systematic reviews looking at CCE in health care were included, incorporating all health care clients with all health problems'.

I assume that original articles presenting data from a single study were also excluded? This should be added to the methods section. Did the authors also consider to include non systematic reviews? Also, when was a review considered a systematic review? Can the authors add their criteria to the methods section? The book: Systematic reviews in health care from Matthias Egger may provide some help here.

'The data analysis approaches utilised involved a close reading and coding of each citation by the first author'. What exactly was coded and how were the codes created (e.g. inductive coding). Have the authors considered to code the information by a second researcher to get insight into the reliability of the coding process? Can the authors give more information about this part of their research in the methods section?

The authors' definition of CCE on the basis of which papers were selected need to be described in the methods section. This way, the reader may understand the variety of activities that were found in the literature e.g. participation in research. Also it would provide insight into why patient-centeredness and empowerment
(page 9) are defined as CCE related concepts.

#Results

Page 4: 'Based on the methodology, 240 non-systematic papers were then excluded'. See my previous commend on the criteria of systematic reviews. These need to be clarified in order to understand why these 240 papers were excluded.

Page 4/5: 'In the next stage, considering the enormous size of the available studies, a new exclusion criterion of time was considered and papers dated before 2010 were excluded...'. The decision to select only papers published after 2010 seems a little arbitrary. Can the authors provide more information on this decision? Were there other reasons besides decreasing the number of included papers? Why are the papers published between 2010 en 2011 representative of the papers published before 2010? Finally, I think it would be informative for readers to see how many papers per year were found as this provides insight into how many papers were close to being included in the study.

Page 5: 'Evaluation of the included papers identified nine different types of activities...'. I do not agree with the authors by defining these broad concepts as activities. For example, self management comprises activities to, among other things, prevent future complications from occurring. Therefore, I would define self management a strategy comprising of activities. Can the authors provide an alternative wording for 'activities'?

How many papers were found reporting on each of the presented 'activities'?). Also, could certain patient groups be identified in which certain 'activities' were used frequently? Can the authors add this information to the corresponding paragraphs in the results section?

Page 9: 'Patient centeredness can incorporate the encouragement of patients’ participation in their health care and related decisions, as discussed in SDM'. It seems here that patient centeredness incorporates SDM. Why was SDM described as an 'activity' instead of patient centeredness? I think it would improve the clarity of the review.

#Discussion

Page 10: 'Although the identified activities vary considerably in their aims, participants and locations, the majority of these activities are directed at expanding role(s) consumers and community members undertake in healthcare'. It is unclear what the authors mean with participants and locations as they are not very specific about this in the results section.

A limitation paragraph is missing in the manuscript and I recommend the authors to add one in the methods section. In a scoping review it is allowed to skip certain methodological aspects that are required when conducting a systematic review. However, these need to be identified precisely. Two suggestions for limitations may be:
- a possible bias in the search terms used by only including those search terms that were used in the initial set of literature.
- The time limit for including papers and its consequences for the presented evidence.

Discretionary revisions:

#Method
Have the authors also considered to conduct a search in the Cochrane database of systematic reviews?

#Results
Fig 1: As the 3044 were not excluded on the basis of the predefined exclusion criteria, I recommend the authors to report the 7034 as the result of their initial search.

Page 4: In presenting the numbers of articles that were excluded during the review process, it may be informative to also report the corresponding percentages.

#Discussion
The authors have provided insight into the concepts used when referring to CCE. However, are all terms found denoted relevant in defining the concept CCE? It may be interesting if the authors can discuss on this in the discussion section.

Minor essential revisions:

#Method
'Citations were downloaded into EndNote X5..' I assume this is to identify duplicates in the search results? This should be mentioned in the text.

#Results
Page 7: 'Within the context of providing access to health care...particular groups or individuals'. This sentence is too long and needs to be revised.

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.