Reviewer's report

Title: Development of a workplace intervention for employees sick-listed with stress-related mental disorders: Intervention Mapping as a useful tool.

Version: 2 Date: 30 April 2007

Reviewer: Marie José Durand

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. Background section
The research question explored by the authors is new, relevant and very innovative. Moreover, literature on intervention for employees on sick-leave for mental disorders is rare. This manuscript is a strong contribution to the domain.

However, some important information is missing:
- A clear definition of stress-related mental disorder should be added.
- How did the authors address the different diagnostic and comorbidity in mental health? Where patients with major depression included in the study?), are they also addressing those people? How can they be sure the mapping of the intervention for this specific target with the stakeholders?
How can the authors be certain that the mapping of the intervention was done with the stakeholders on stress mental disorder and not on major depression

Method section
The authors used the PW and developed a protocol with IM. This part of the research is very innovative as they based their approach on the knowledge of PW with low back pain. The IM method is well described and coherently used in the article. Unfortunately, some information is missing and it might be difficult to reproduce the approach.

Feasibility: what is the number and characteristic of the companies involved in the process, p.6

Theoretical Framework: This part of the manuscript need to be reviewed. In the introduction, the authors mentioned the importance of using evidence. However, we can not reproduce there literature review (p.7) since the population is not well described and neither the source of literature. Also, recent literature recognizes that stress-related mental disorder is the result of personal and work factors. Literature also underlines the importance to act on the person but also in the workplace. The authors retained the ASE model as the framework of the program and do not sufficiently justify their choice. This model only focus on the person. In my opinion, this choice do not reflect the new evidence in work intervention and consider that the person is the only one responsible for creating the problem. This perspective seems to be very reductionist.

2. Result section
Feasibility: This section has to be reviewed. We understand that a need assessment had been done but more information on the feasibility on this type of program for employer and employee is needed.
p. 11: Step 1 is well described
p.19: Implementation: This section has to be more detailed. How many employers were involved? How many cases were included? followed? What were the indicators used?

Other results are adequate.

3. Discussion section: adequate
4. Title and abstract are adequate
5. Figures are essentials, and clearly illustrate the different step of the IM
In summary, this article is new and very important. However, some missing information, particularly on the theoretical framework and definition of the population, removes credibility to the approach used. In my view, this manuscript should be accepted with major revision.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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' below.