Reviewer's report

Title: Development of a complex intervention to test the effectiveness of peer support in type 2 diabetes

Version: Date: 7 April 2007

Reviewer: Lillie Shortridge-Baggett

Reviewer's report:

General
1. The question posed by the authors is new and well defined. The study addresses an important problem area. The need for the study is well defined. Although some references are old, there are excellent current ones included.
2. The methods are appropriate and well described, and sufficient details are provided to replicate the work. Using the UK Medical Research Council guide for intervention development and citing the work by Sturt, et al. (2006) indicate an acceptable approach to achieving the desired outcomes. With the emphasis on randomized clinical trials the importance of the preliminary work is often lost. Sharing the results of these phases of a study is important too. The training of the people for the peer support role is necessary for success of the project. Testing this before starting a large scale project needs to be done.
3. Data are sound and well controlled. The results of the first phases of the intervention are presented. Very brief data have been given for the qualitative part of the study, but was illustrative of how the interventions were developed. The data on which the critique given of the work by Lorig and Holman (1989) is based were not presented. Also the only citation noted is old so the difference of the proposed intervention and those studied by Lorig and colleagues over the past several years is unclear.
4. The manuscript adheres to the relevant standards for reporting and for data disposition. The manuscript is well written.
5. The discussion and conclusions are well balanced and adequately supported by the data. Although all the issues included in the Discussion had not been presented clearly in the manuscript as part as resulting from the study, the reader knows that these issues arose during the study. They are important to include. The Conclusions are very brief.
6. The title of manuscript and the names of authors were share with the reviewer; an abstract was not shared for review. Maybe the reviewer just did not locate it.
7. The writing is acceptable

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
None

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
None

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

See the comments related to the Discussion can show the link with the phases of the study thus far. Also the differentiation of current project with work by Lorig and colleagues might need further clarification.

What next?: Accept after discretionary 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.