Reviewer's report

**Title:** The development of a theory-based intervention to promote appropriate disclosure of a diagnosis of dementia

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 30 August 2007

**Reviewer:** Chris J Armitage

**Reviewer's report:**

**General**

This is an interesting manuscript, designed to describe the process of developing an intervention to promote appropriate disclosure of a diagnosis of dementia. An earlier phase has previously been published in Implementation Science, and an evaluation of the intervention will be reported elsewhere. A key question for this review, then, is: does this manuscript add sufficiently to the literature? I think there are some issues to be addressed before it does.

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

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

First, I fully endorse the principles underpinning the development of interventions of this kind that are laid out in Table 1. However, it then seems counterintuitive seemingly to dispense with these principles and focus on only a couple of variables. It is not made clear how this manuscript takes us further than the ‘standard’ approach to developing interventions that is critiqued in the Introduction.

Second, there seems to be some oversight regarding the status of predictive variables in multiple regression, which boils down to the distinction between predicting something and explaining something (e.g., Sutton, 1998). The difficulty is that although the significant variables in the regression equations can be said to be predictive of intention, there is no evidence to suggest they are explanatory. In other words, if (for example) self-efficacy is predictive of intention, it does not necessarily mean that changing self-efficacy will bring about a change in intention. All that can be said for sure is that people who are low in self-efficacy should receive some sort of intervention, but not that a change in self-efficacy would necessarily bring about a change in intention.

More generally, it might be useful to refer to a recent meta-analysis (Webb & Sheeran, 2006), which shows a cause-and-effect relationship between intention and behaviour to strengthen the justification for using intention as an outcome.
measures.


What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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