Author's response to reviews

Title: Coping with uncertainty during healthcare-seeking. A qualitative study in Lao PDR.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Subject: Re-submission of paper based on reviewer comments

Dear Editor Team,

Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to revise our manuscript entitled “Coping with uncertainty during health-care seeking. A qualitative study in Lao PDR.”

We are very thankful for the clarifications made by the reviewer and we have attempted to address them all. For further details see the attached point-by-point outline of modifications.

The manuscript has been edited again by a professional language editor and we hope the revisions are considered acceptable.

We hope that you will find the article suitable for publication in its revised form.

For all authors and with kind regards,

Helle M Alvesson
Outline of modifications

Reviewer 1

1. Abstract: Clarify whether the last two sentences are related to each other:
   Yes, the two sentences relate to health workers and we have amended the text accordingly.

2. Background, paragraph 2: Please clarify the meaning of the sentence, “It means that its field is the conversation with fellow humans that is the source of guidance for the afflicted…” What is the referent for “its field”? Does that refer to uncertainty?
   Yes, it refers to uncertainty. We have rephrased the sentence to clarify this.

3. Discussion, paragraph 6: The sentence “Community members expressed uncertainty about selecting the right provider, about the likelihood of finding the real cause of the illness, about spending savings on treatments, and ultimately about the likelihood of recovery” nicely states the ways in which uncertainty enters healthcare seeking for the participants in your study. It would be helpful to the reader to also highlight these points in the discussion:
   We have moved this sentence up and it now serves as the introduction to the discussion.

4. Conclusion, sentence 3: Please clarify the meaning of the phrase “increased number of available providers”. Do you mean a larger number of providers of the same type, or do you mean a larger number of types of available providers?
   We have revised and clarified that we mean a larger number of types of available providers.

Discretionary Revisions

5. Background, paragraph 4: Does the word “unexpected” capture the intended meaning in the sentence “The outcome of treatments is often still unexpected…” Do you mean that the outcomes of treatment are “uncertain”? Or are the outcomes truly unexpected?
   It is more correct to say “uncertain”. The change has been inserted.

6. Methods, paragraph 2, last sentence: Should the order of “high and low” vs. “low and high” be consistent, or is the opposite order intended?
   The order should be consistent and we have made the change in the text.

7. Discussion, paragraph 7: The meaning of the sentence “Uncertainties also related to ways of avoiding new worries and how to think of future illness decisions…” is unclear to me.
   We agree. The sentence is leading up to a more complex discussion on cultural meaning which is not appropriate for this part of the discussion. We have deleted the sentence.
8. Table 1. For ease of reading, please define “VHV” and “TBA” in a note in the table, as you have done in the text.

We have clarified the acronyms.