Reviewer's report

Title: Systematic synthesis of community-based rehabilitation (CBR) project evaluation reports for evidence-based policy: A proof-of-concept study

Version: 3 Date: 14 December 2007

Reviewer: Harry Finkenflugel

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions

1. The authors have now merged the two articles into one article. To my understanding the focus is - and should be - on "a proof-of-concept study"; firstly to discuss the method chosen and secondly to present some results. However, this two-fold is not always used consistently. For example, in the abstract the paragraph on 'conclusions' starts with recommendations where it should have started with a conclusion on the suitability of the method. The same applies to the paragraph on 'results'. This should start with something like: "the method allowed us to identify 51 themes in eight categories".

(The background section is consistent as it focuses fully on the need to develop appropriate technologies)

2. The 'key themes' and the 'major themes' are essential in the manuscript but the elaboration on the 'minor themes' distracts my attention from the purpose of this article. I would recommend to bring this down to 1/3 or less to give examples on some of the minor themes.

3. Under 'Discussion' there is a section on 'limitations'. This section starts with "An additional goal ...". But this is the key issue of this manuscript, if I understood it well.

4. In my first review I have made comments on what happens if you chose to analyze recommendations only. One of my arguments was that this analysis is on perceived shortcomings of the project and does not inform us about successful parts of the projects nor about issues that have not been addressed at all. I feel this should be mentioned in the last section of 'Background'.

I would like to suggest to the authors to have a look at my earlier review and try to incorporate my points more explicitly.

Minor essential revisions
5.
I suggest to include the total number of conclusions in the 37 reports (and how these were spread).

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