Reviewer’s report

Title: Normalization Process Theory: a framework for developing, evaluating and implementing complex interventions.

Version: 1 Date: 16 June 2010

Reviewer: Jo Rycroft-Malone

Reviewer’s report:

I have been reading with the interest the development and application of the normalisation process theory, so was pleased to be given the opportunity to review this paper.

The following are offered by way of suggestions as to how I think the potential of the paper could be enhanced.

Major compulsory revisions

Overall, I felt that the description of the application of the theory to the issue - developing, evaluating, and implementing complex interventions –lacked some depth and analysis/criticality. Within each section I wanted to know more about not only the practicalities of applying the theory, but also some of the challenges of doing so. For example, within section 2.1 define the context, it is suggested that the theory can be used to better understand the context of implementation as a tool for alerting researchers to a range of relevant contextual issues, but I wasn’t clear how this would be operationalised in reality, and then how that information is used. Perhaps embedding some of the examples (in boxes) closer to the text would help this explanation, and expanding the information provided about application (e.g. what do you do with the information re action).

It would be helpful to hear what the team believe are the strengths AND limitations of applying NPT in this context, and how it might compare to the use of other theories and frameworks. An expanded articulation of how the ideas within the paper advance our thinking about these issues would also be useful, and linking this to the evidence base about tailoring interventions (re recent Cochrane review) would also provide an additional related angle.

Minor revisions

The team might want to expand the abstract to more fully reflect the content of the paper.

Which journal?: Not appropriate for BMC Medicine: an article of only archival interest, but might be suited to BMC Health Services Research

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