Reviewer’s report

Title: The face of equipoise: a qualitative study of the experiences of deliverers of a structured education programme within a randomised controlled trial in type 2 diabetes

Version: 1 Date: 20 June 2013

Reviewer: Vigneswari Aravindalochanan

Reviewer’s report:

This original research article entitled “The face of equipoise: a qualitative study of the experiences of deliverers of a structured education programme within a randomized controlled trial in type 2 diabetes” has documented the views and experiences of the educators, who played a key role in delivering two different interventions viz. SMBG and SMUG in a randomized controlled trial.

The study addresses an important issue in standardizing the delivery of behavioral interventions and also indicates the necessity of training the deliverers on the concepts of equipoise.

I would like to suggest the authors to elaborate on the following aspects for the sake of readers and also to give a clear picture for future researchers

Minor Essential Revisions:

Abstract:
The total number of participants in focus group in phase1 given in Abstract and in the Methods section of the manuscript is not same [17 or 18]

Methods:
2nd paragraph 7th line – It is better to replace the word -in one “practice” with “PCT”

The information on the prior experience of the study participants on such RCTs can be added in addition to their professional background.

It is important to describe the details related to the duration and topics covered in the training program and also about the attempts if any made to encourage the level of participation (interaction).

It is necessary to provide sufficient details regarding the duration of the focus group discussion.

In phase 3, the reason for the authors to prefer individual telephone interview rather than a focus group is not clear. It is also necessary to know whether it had any significant impact on the retrieval of wealth of information from the participants.

The authors have mentioned about the domains (topics) included for focus group in methods section. The same is not reflected in the results section. The details such as codes identified in each domain and how were they categorized and
presented as four threads in pre RCT is not clear.

The discussion section is well written and the authors had discussed both the similarities and dissimilarities of surgeon/clinician researchers from the previous studies with that of participants of the current study in detail.

Discretionary Revisions:

The authors can present the results of 1." Pre RCT – lack of equipoise" under two sub headings pre training and post training. This will enable the readers to understand the impact of training (theory session) followed by their practical experience in delivering the intervention and finally how they had overcome the challenges.

Overall, the study gave an insight of the vital role of the deliverers and also the importance of training them to make aware of their responsibility and also assist them to handle the challenges for a successful implementation of behavioral implementation.

**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