Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors influencing the implementation of a mental health guideline: an exploratory investigation using psychological theory

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Brian,

Guideline implementation: an exploratory investigation using psychological theory
Thank you for your e-mail. Below I list the concerns raised by the two helpful referees' reports and our responses to them.

Reviewer 1: Shaun Treweek

1. Over-simple attribution of high implementation to pharmaceutical industry marketing.
The following phrase has been omitted: "suggesting that where guidance had the support and resources of the pharmaceutical industry behind it there may be greater uptake".

2. Include consideration as to why theory is not used more in implementation research.
The following sentence has been added "For theory to be used in implementation research, theory needs to be seen to be relevant, researchers need to have expertise in behavioural theory, and theory needs to be accessible and useful. The relevance of theories of behaviour change would be more apparent if implementation of research findings were conceived in terms of health professional behaviour" and reference to the suggested Eccles paper has been made.

3. Information about the interviewers has been added.
Confidence intervals have been added to Table 2 and the following sentence has been added "However, the wide confidence intervals shown in Table 2 mean that differences between the point estimates may not in this sample, represent true differences, but the play of chance."

4. " The reference to differences between staff groups in the Discussion has been qualified by referring to the two specific groups, nurses and social workers. The typo in Table 2 re. numbers in Trusts has been corrected.

5. Discussion: make case for usefulness of a theory-based approach.
The following has been added, with appropriate references "The advantage of using this theoretical approach over atheoretical approaches is two-fold. First, the assessment of problems is comprehensive, covering all the areas that, theoretically, are known to predict behaviour or bring about changes in behaviour. Second, understanding behaviour theoretically has implications for the nature and targeting of interventions that are likely to be effective. Work has begun to link theoretical domains with techniques of behaviour change and to use the domains in developing interventions to increase implementation. An example is the development and evaluation of an intervention strategy for general physicians' management of lower back pain, on the basis of the identified theoretical domains."
Reviewer 2: Lisa Klesges

Major compulsory revisions: description of methods

1. Clarify method of scoring transcripts and explain coding for multiple statements within a domain
   "Interviewees' responses were considered for their conceptual relevance to each domain and those judged to be relevant to one or more of the domains were selected for analysis. For each participant, the total transcribed text relevant to each domain was scored 1, 0.5 or 0 depending on whether there was good evidence, partial or no evidence of the domain being relevant to the implementation of the recommendation. Scores were assigned on the basis of a global impression of all the statements relevant to each domain."

2. Justify or mention limitation of using a "0" score for no comments or for comments that reflected a problem
   The third paragraph of the Discussion has been expanded to read "This is a small study, using a very simple coding scheme. For example, a non-response in a particular domain may suggest an implementation problem; however, this is an inference and there may be other explanations for non-response. The study therefore has value more in demonstrating an approach to understanding and addressing implementation problems theoretically, than in providing definitive answers."

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Title: this has been changed to "Factors influencing the implementation of a mental health guideline: an exploratory investigation using psychological theory"

   The sentence: "Using a theoretical framework derived from an interdisciplinary consensus exercise which synthesised theoretical constructs relevant to implementation research into 12 domains, this study aimed to produce a profile of scores to identify the domains relevant to problems of implementation." has been changed to the sentences "This study applied psychological theory to describe problems of implementation. It used a theoretical framework derived from an interdisciplinary consensus exercise, to produce a profile of scores across 12 theoretical domains."

3. Abrupt transition on p.5 from theory-based implementation interview to specific barriers in mental health.
   The following sentence has been added, and small changes made to the subsequent two sentences: "The current study seeks to apply this generic theory-based approach to elucidate problems of guideline implementation in a different health area, that of mental health."

4.- 6. Clarify the sampling. This paragraph has been re-written as:
   "Participants were selected from three UK NHS Mental Health Trusts, two inner-city (South and North London) serving similar areas of high psychiatric morbidity and the third covering a mixed population including inner-city, suburban and rural areas) in the North of England. Mental health trust are the major providers of specialist mental health services in the English healthcare system and their major means of service delivery are multi-disciplinary community teams services known as Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs). To gain a range of responses relevant to the national implementation of these guidelines, two CMHTs from each Trust were selected using two criteria: they had begun the process of implementing, or were planning to implement, the guideline, and they were not known to be either particularly high or low implementers of the guideline. The team identification process was verified by discussion with the senior manager/clinician in the participating trust who had responsibility for guideline implementation . The CMHTs identified were similar to other non-participating teams in the size, composition, work load and general population served. One of the South London teams that was approached declined to participate due to work pressure, giving a sample of five. Participants were recruited from the key professional groups responsible for implementing the guidelines: social workers, nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists and team managers."

7. Give more detail about the interview procedures.
   The identity of the interviewers is included, "two psychology graduates" and the following sentence is added: "The interviews included dialogue, with clarifications requested by both interviewer and interviewee, and supplementary questions used if interviewees said little in response to the first question."
8. Give more detail about the raters. The following sentence has been added.

"Two psychologists (SM and JS) with experience of mental health independently coded each interview. SM, who has considerable experience in transcript coding, trained JS in using the coding criteria with a set of transcripts of interviews about a different recommendation."


The following sentence has been added: "These problems were presented, without specific probing."

10. Domain associated with greater difficulty now listed.

11. Give condition/disease for reference #21: this has been added.

With best wishes,

Susan