Reviewer's report

Title: Scoping studies: Advancing the methodology

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Reviewer: Stuart Anderson

Reviewer's report:

1. This is an interesting and useful paper that responds directly to a request for feedback given in an earlier paper by Arksey and O'Malley.
2. The feedback provided is detailed, specific and practical and is based on the experience of undertaking three separate and independent scoping studies in a health field. It makes appropriate reference to the relevant literature in this area, usefully drawing together reviews and analyses undertaken in the last two years.
3. The paper offers realistic suggestions for strengthening each of the six stages in the Arksey and O'Malley methodological framework. The reflections made in working through the framework and the recommendations for further elaboration of the framework are helpful, whilst making it clear that these are optional additions rather than mandatory requirements.
4. The three tables provide useful summaries of the existing literature in this area (table 1), the Arksey and O'Malley framework (table 2) and the challenges and recommendations for carrying out scoping studies.
5. The limitations of the study are clearly acknowledged and spelled out. The authors readily acknowledge that the recommendations they propose are based on their own subjective experiences of undertaking scoping studies in the rehabilitation field.
6. They further acknowledge that they have not yet implemented the full framework recommendations themselves. For these reasons they may more appropriately be described as 'suggestions' rather than recommendations.
7. Nevertheless the paper makes a worthwhile contribution to the development of scoping studies methodologies, and its publication will facilitate others in taking the discussion further.

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