Author’s response to reviews

Title: The transfer of an Aboriginal Australian wellbeing program: A grounded theory study

Authors:

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor

The submitted manuscript, ‘The transfer of an Aboriginal Australian wellbeing program: A grounded theory study’, is a revised version of the previously submitted manuscript no. 1927767008081982. The previous manuscript was considered by reviewers to address an original, important and well defined question, but the reviewers found major problems with the methods results and analysis. In this revised manuscript, I have carefully considered the reviewers concerns, and made major amendments to the manuscript, as outlined below.

1. All three reviewers requested more detail on the methods regarding the analysis process (with referencing as necessary), and strategies to enhance rigour, including trustworthiness

The methods section was revised, with detail of methods included under the new subheadings: study design, settings, intervention, research respondents, data collection and data analysis. Details of the method related to the trustworthiness of the analysis were included under the new data analysis and limitations sections. The revision of the methods section more clearly delineated the roles of the 18 research respondents who were people active in transferring the program, as distinct from the 3300 participants who had enrolled in the program. The pseudonyms of research respondents were removed, with just descriptors retained. Details of interview methods (Length and interviewer) were included. The grounded theory methods by which the theoretical model was developed were explained.

2. Information on the limitations of the study so that readers can judge the quality

A new section was added to the manuscript to outline the study’s limitations.

3. Reviewer 1: Questionning of the term Aboriginal Australians

Although Torres Strait Islander people did participate in some of the program deliveries (as did non-Indigenous people), the program was developed by and for Aboriginal Australians. Hence the term “Aboriginal Australians” was retained, rather than the more generic term “Indigenous Australians”.

4. Typographical errors have been highlighted throughout the text.

The typographical errors highlighted have been corrected.

5. Reviewer 2: Include ethics approval for the study

Ethics approval is included.

6. Add a short paragraph introducing the structure of the results
A short paragraph introducing the structure of the results is provided.

7. Review the advantages and disadvantages of including Figures 1 & 2

Figures 1 and 2 were taken out, and a new Figure 2 substituted.

8. Reviewer 3: Lacks some clarity as to its purpose and the definition of transfer. The context for the manuscript (i.e., the three stages of knowledge-into-action) is not revisited in the conclusion.

The term transfer is defined, and the introduction section revised to clarify the intent of the paper. The study is recontextualised within the program transfer literature, with the results and discussion referring back to the literature relating to the process of program transfer through lateral, informal and organic methods.

9. The relationship between the "critical structural conditions which enabled or constrained the transfer ", and the theory that is developed?

The structural conditions are identified in the manuscript as leadership; government policies; accountabilities; and resources, particularly funding. These are considered as part of the constructed model – i.e. program transfer occurred through relatedness with these structural conditions, as well as within and between organisations.

10. The conclusions seem limited - it seems that the authors conclude the importance of empowerment and networks, both of which are already well known, particularly in Aboriginal community, and are currently practiced (albeit not always well).

The importance of empowerment and networks are established in the Aboriginal Australian health and governance literatures, but have not previously been theorised as important to program transfer.

11. The abstract requires more detail

More detail provided.

12. A fundamental assumption of the paper is that the FWB has been transferred. However, there is little evidence of this.

Justification is provided for why this program offers a good example for the study of transfer. Included is a new figure which demonstrates the geographical spread of the program across Australia.

13. It is also important to document the "community-level outcomes" that occurred given that this pertains to the success of the program, and heightens the need for transfer to occur.

The community level outcomes are briefly described. However, the main intent of this paper is to provide a theoretical model of how and why the program was transferred. The community level program outcomes are described in other literature (with references provided in this manuscript).

I appreciate your consideration of my responses to the reviewers’ comments, and appreciate your reconsideration of the submitted manuscript for publication in Implementation Science.

Yours sincerely

Janya McCalman