Reviewer's report

Title: Implementing a provider-initiated testing and counselling (PITC) intervention in Cape Town, South Africa: A process evaluation using the Normalisation Process Model

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Reviewer: Tom Blakeman

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Title: Implementing a provider-initiated testing and counselling (PITC) intervention in Cape Town, South Africa: A process evaluation using the Normalisation Process Model

Authors: Natalie Leon, Simon Lewin and Catherine Mathews

Dear Professor Rogers

Thank you for inviting me to review this article. Please find below comments, which I hope the authors find helpful. Overall the manuscript is well written with a clear description of the methodological approach taken. The research is of relevance to implementation of HIV testing and is also of relevance to the design and evaluation of complex interventions in other settings.

The manuscript is well written, with a clear title and abstract. A clear line of argument is articulated in the background section, with justification for the methodological approach taken. The study setting and the intervention are clearly described in the methods section and the range of methods chosen enhances the trustworthiness of the findings. It enabled comparative analysis across a range of participants, settings and types of data (i.e. interview accounts and observational data).

The box and tables presented are very clear and enhance understanding of Normalisation Process Model, the intervention and the findings.

The results section reads well. The illustrative quotes support the analysis presented.

Minor Essential Revisions

I note that interviews with 20 patients were conducted as part of the study. However, they are not explicit within the data presented in the results. From my understanding of the Normalisation Process Model, the constructs 'interactional workability' and 'relational integration' both relate to the individual and collective work that occurs in the immediacy of encounters (i.e. clinical encounters). As such, if possible, I think the study would benefit from drawing upon a comparative
analysis of professional and patients accounts. If this is not possible, then this needs to be critiqued in the strengths and limitations section of the discussion.

Discretionary Revisions
The authors acknowledge a tension in using NPM as a framework for analysis. Like all frameworks, it has the potential to structure and also constrain understanding of a phenomenon, with the potential of forcing data into particular constructs. It would be helpful if the authors could expand on how they dealt with the tension that they described (see page 29), perhaps in the methods section.

In summary, the manuscript is very well written and with a few suggested changes, I recommend the article for publication

Regards
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Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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