Reviewer's report

Title: Understanding the physical activity promotion behaviours of podiatrists: A qualitative study.

Version: 1 Date: 18 July 2013

Reviewer: Andrea Graham

Reviewer's report:

This is a novel and timely (in an environment driven by requirements for improved self-management of patients with chronic disease) research paper with a number of interesting results for consideration by the wider Podiatry Profession.

Minor Essential Revisions:

General considerations: A substantial amount of data has been collected here in relation to participant demographics - but this detail has not really been considered within the context of the results of thematic analysis. Is this because there were no differences between gender, age ranges, country of origin of qualification, whether the participants were in private or public practice, amount of physical exercise undertaken by individual participants etc? if not could this be stated within the results for clarity? and if there were any notable differences could these be included in the results and considered with the discussion? It would be interesting to see if any differences were prevalent within the participant population.

Can the word 'participants' be used instead of 'podiatrists' - so it is clear that the authors are referring to those in the study not podiatrists generally?

Page 4, method: 3rd line: what are the health practitioner registers that were used? can a reference (web address?) be provided for these?

Page 5: line 2, "the advantage is that this method provides greater flexibility of coverage and produces richer data....." Than what? could this be clarified? for example - did the authors consider any other methods of qualitative data collection (e.g focus groups) and if so, why were they not used.

Page 5: paragraph 3: other than the TPB model did anything else influence the development of the questionnaire for the interviews? were the questions modified from those of other similar studies following a search of the literature for example? Following the pilot of the interview questions, were any modifications made to ensure clarity of meaning or understanding? and can the authors clarify the purpose of the pilot?

Page 6, line 2 (end of method section): was any 'member checking' undertaken once the interviews had been transcribed to allow the participants the opportunity
to view the transcribed dialogue and ensure it was a faithful representation of the interview? (trustworthiness of the data).

Page 6, paragraph 2, line 2: state age range of participants for clarity.

Page 7, paragraph 3, Line 2: " A number of podiatrists.." can the number be given for context?

Page 7, paragraph 4: reference made to additional file for supportive quotes... which quote? can an exemplar not be placed in the text here if the point is significant enough to be included in the results for discussion? ** can this be considered throughout the narrative where this has been done so the reader doesn't have to refer to a separate document?**

Page 8, paragraph 3: could this be considered as ' stereotyping ' of patients by the participants perhaps?

Page 10, Line 1: clarity needed where it states " needing to receive the message.." what message?

Page 10, paragraph 3, line 3: can ' formal ' as opposed to ' informal ' follow up be defined briefly?

Page 10, Paragraph 4, line 2: where it says " a few podiatrists" can the number be provided for context?

Page 11, paragraph 4, line 1: consider rephrasing sentence for clarity..e.g: "the patient was perceived by the podiatrist as being unmotivated..."

Page 13, paragraph 2: coding of participant "Pod 9 Public".. does this mean all the other podiatrists that were quoted in the study were Private practitioners? can the codes for the other participants reflect their status also?

Page 14, paragraph 3: between exemplars consider joining the quotes with: "Participants exhibited a range of beliefs towards the effectiveness of their health promotion from positive....(quote pod 8) to negative (quote pod 20).

Page 15, paragraph 1, line 1: "A few podiatrists..." can the number be stated for context?

Page 15, paragraph 2, line 6: spelling- "behavioural" and "counselling" - (although that is UK versions...if it's US spelling then yours are correct...)

Page 16, paragraph 1, line 7: can it be clarified who’s attitude is claimed to be an instrumental factor? and - is there a reference to support the statement regarding the association between physical activity assessment /promotion and the role of the podiatrist? and where it says 'a few' can the number be given for context? and consider ending this paragraph with clarification..." there is a distinct lack of clarity around the role of all health professionals, in relation to the promotion of physical activity and related health behaviour"
Page 16, paragraph 2, 2nd to 4th line: this point requires clarification in relation to the nature of 'manual tasks' and how they provide opportunity to counsel patients.

Page 17, paragraph 2 (concluding sentence): justification?as to why follow up doesn't happen? what did the results of the study lead you to conclude with regards this point?

Page 17, paragraph 3, (concluding sentence): providing tailored physical health activity advice - is mirrored by other areas of foothealth education where such an approach is similarly advocated - e.g: in diabetes and RA and you could use this to support your concluding summary?

Page 18, Paragraph 3 and 4: ? supportive references? and paragraph 3: was there any consideration of alternative methods of data collection? pro's/con's of this?

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