Reviewer’s report

Title: Obstacles to recruitment in paediatric studies focusing on mental health in a physical health context: The experiences of clinical gatekeepers in an observational cohort study

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Reviewer: Safora Johansen

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Obstacles to recruitment in paediatric studies focusing on mental health in a physical health context: The experiences of clinical gatekeepers in an observational cohort study

Recruitment process is very challenging and time consuming. Therefore, it is important to share experiences to improve and speed up the recruitment process.

The present study has collected the feedbacks from the involved clinicians involved in the recruitment. The manuscript is well-written and easy to follow up and understand the contain. However, in my opinion there are some revisions necessary to improve the manuscript:

Introduction:

The following can be added:

- What are the inclusion criteria for the study the recruitment was about. It is mentioned that the participants having a mental health disease with age 12-18. Are they the only inclusion criteria? - It is an advantage to include this in the manuscript in order to give the reader a better understanding of the project and the recruitment difficulty

- It is also mentioned that the recruitment was for an observational study. What is it the research group involved in this study aimed to observe?

- Was the recruitment performed only through the gatekeepers or other recruitment methods were used? If not, please explain why.

Methods:

- Is the study approved by the ethics? If so, please add it to the methods. And if not, let us know why.
Findings:

The following can be added or revised:

- What does this mean; "P1 or P2 etc"? Is the number of respondents giving the same answer? If so please mention it under methods on the Table text.

- You refer to subtheme number f eks subtheme 3 a in pare 8, line 25. However, I cannot see this specification in the table or in the methods. Where does his definition comes from? You need to define it in the methods.

- The name of the study was mentioned as a weakness for recruitment. My question is; "Haven't you present the study for the gatekeepers in advance giving them to come up with their feedback and comments before the recruitment started?". If not this can be the first thing the research group should think of in the next study and related recruitment.

When all these are said, my only concern is that this study is specific to a small research area and difficult to generalize it. Otherwise, it is very interesting study and worth to share it with others.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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