Reviewer's report

Title: Qualitative evaluation of primary care providers experiences of a training programme to offer brief behaviour change counselling on risk factors for non-communicable diseases in South Africa

Version: 4 Date: 7 June 2015

Reviewer: Jo Hart

Reviewer's report:

Unfortunately I can't see the authors responses to previous review; so apologies if I am repeating areas already covered in those reviews.

I enjoyed reading this article - I think the qualitative evaluation of a large scale intervention such as this is very important. It is unfortunate that the quantitative paper has not yet been published as it would be good to look at these together - but the description of the training materials and the online information is very useful for contextualising this study.

I thought the combination of use of the field notes and the qualitative interviews was good - it gave a rounded picture of the participants' perceptions.

The methods were described well.

Minor essential revisions:

I would find it helpful to have more information about the participants - ideally by an additional table with information about each respondent e.g. background/speciality, years of experience, age, gender, low/medium/high scorer (mentioned in results) other relevant background information.

Labelling the themes and structuring the results section: it would be helpful to outline the themes at the beginning of the results section and then label each section of the results with that theme title - it is hard to know how many themes and sub themes were identified.

Use of quotes: There is some repetition of quotes - more than quote saying a similar thing. I would recommend that there was more text describing the quotes and interpreting the themes, and the number of quotes is cut down.

Table 2: it is unclear whether these are some the same participants making comments pre and post training?

Labelling of quotes: it is not clear from the quotes which come from the field notes and which from the interviews, or how many participants they came from (i.e. it could be one doctor or nurse providing all of the quotes). would suggest they are also labelled with an ID number.

Throughout - occasionally, the language refers to change in the participants - i
think that should be more cautious - presumably, the quantitative findings will present more information about changes in the health professionals. This study focuses on exploring perceptions in the participants - and I would say that the methodology is not appropriate for looking at change.

**Level of interest:** An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

**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