Reviewer's report

Title: Barriers and facilitators to primary care for people with mental health and/or substance use issues: A qualitative study

Version: 2  Date: 29 July 2015

Reviewer: Samuel Ho

Reviewer's report:

This paper reports the results of semi-structured interviews with 85 adults with mental health and/or substance abuse issues and 17 providers regarding barriers to primary care access. The study was conducted with self-identified patients in a single city and associated with a large tertiary mental health hospital, two community family health centers, and a family health team. The interviews indicated that transportation and individual psychologic issues were major factors affecting access to primary care, and that providers had variations in knowledge and attitudes that affected their care of these patients. Several system level barriers were identified including the type of model of primary care practiced. The methods were somewhat limited in that all the patients and providers were self-selected for participation and both groups were given financial incentives to participate. The paper elucidates some important factors that are barriers for access for this group of patients.

Specific comments:
1. Methods page 4 line 59 – define “family health team” and the providers this consists of.
2. Methods page 4 line 65 – state the organization and city associated with “Center for Addiction and Mental Health.” Is this affiliated with an academic organization?
3. Results – the results could be more clearly indicating by listing the themes derived from the coded transcripts in a table.
4. There is no reference indicated for reference #19. Also references #20 and 21 are missing.
5. Discussion – collaborative care models between mental health and primary care have been extensively reported and there are systematic reviews and metaanalyses published, the authors should site some of these recent reviews.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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 I have no competing interests.