Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Interprofessional collaboration in nursing homes (interprof): Development and piloting of measures to improve interprofessional collaboration and communication: A qualitative multicentre study

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 13 Jan 2017

**Reviewer:** Julie Chen

**Reviewer’s report:**

This is an example of action research aimed to improve quality of care in German nursing homes, by targeting the interprofessional collaboration between doctors and nurses in this setting. The study takes a qualitative approach to identify the problems and possible solutions, develops and implements an intervention plan and uses self-evaluation to assess the impact of the intervention. It is a sensible approach which seemed to have led to real change and I commend the authors for their valuable work. However, I have some concerns about the methodology and the overall clarity of the paper and offer some comments as follows:

Background

1. The justification for doing the study is a bit weak - more elaboration on the evidence provided in the background would better convince the reader that interprofessional collaboration and communication in nursing homes is indeed a key problem that needs to be addressed (e.g. p5 line 2 - why have German authorities indicated that better interprofessional communication is necessary?). Explanation is particularly important when the references are not accessible in English.

2. Some facts and figures about the nursing home situation in Germany would help provide context. Is quality of care a problem and how serious is it?

Methodology

3. A well articulated conceptual framework for the study (e.g. action research or other framework) is needed to situate the study in a larger research context

4. Grounded theory is cited as the main methodology but would seem to be overly ambitious as there is no evidence of in-depth exploration of views, there is no theory generated from this study and the steps necessary in grounded theory (depending on the type of grounded theory) are not apparent in this paper.

5. Interviews with stakeholders were used to develop the interview guidelines but no mention is made of drawing from the larger body of German and global literature especially as it
was indicated in the background that several German qualitative studies had been done on this topic previously.

6. Suggest including the interview guide

7. Purposive sampling - specifics on this would be helpful

8. Interviews - how long were the interviews? Privacy during the interview? These factors may influence the quality and the validity of the comments

9. Setting - a description of the rough numbers and general kinds of patients in the study sites, collectively if anonymity is an issue.

10. Why was the mind mapping approach selected for the focus group and expert workshop parts of the study?

Results

11. More detailed presentation of the findings from the interviews and the mindmapping processes to demonstrate evidence that the original data led to the themes identified, i.e. quotations. Though it is mentioned that this omission was deliberate, the rationale for this was not clear or compelling.

12. Evaluation of pilot study - it is unclear how robust the evaluation of impact was - what were the outcome measures and how were they assessed? Was a baseline measure taken to quantify change?

Discussion

13. The limitations of the study and future work to be pursued are well articulated.

General

14. I would suggest a review of the English to improve the grammar and fluency for an international audience, e.g. some sentence structure is awkward: p 4 Background line 6 "It is provided mainly in nursing home visits of GPs" as well as proofreading for typos (e.g. inconsistent referencing format - p6 third last line).

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

No
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

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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