Reviewer’s report

Title: How general practitioners perceive and assess self-care in patients with multiple chronic conditions: a qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 07 Feb 2017

Reviewer: Robin Jacobs

Reviewer's report:

This purpose of this study was to investigate general practice physicians' (GP) perceptions and assessment of the ability of patients with multimorbid chronic conditions to engage in self-care including treatment adherence. The researchers conducted qualitative interviews with 12 providers using provider-selected cases as discussion foci. Due to the lack dearth of information on self-management in patients with mutimorbid chronic conditions, this manuscript has the potential to make a contribution to the literature. It is this reviewers' aim to provide feedback on how to improve the potential contribution of this manuscript.

I am having difficulty with the term "social deprivation" used throughout this manuscript. Please identify or define this term as it may denote a negative connotation in certain contexts. Perhaps consider "economically disadvantaged" or "lower socio-economic status."

Line 64: Inspired by the Chronic Care Model [13], the Danish DMPs have been introduced for a number of chronic conditions to improve the management of chronic conditions and reduce care utilization [2]. - this sentence does not make sense…is it a typo / grammatical error?

In methods - line 79: …. "first, a presentation by the first author…" Consider merely using the term "researcher" instead.

Tables need headings/formatting and percentage clarification - omit the terms fraction and proportion and substitute with percentage and number.

Why did each "hypothesized" case presented during the GP interviews have diabetes (plus other chronic illnesses)? Why not any combination of any chronic diseases? What is the rationale for this choice [of having to have diabetes]?

Why use real (albeit *anonymized*) cases brought forth by the participants (and not fictional ones) you interviewed? Wouldn't that cause a potential bias in their responses? (I see this was addressed in the limitations).

How was the qualitative analysis conducted - coding by hand, the use of analytic software (e.g., NVivo, Atlas ti)? Please explain this procedure in more detail.
Consider removing the outlines text boxes - they are distracting - just present the text in italics or in quotes.

The authors did a good job of delineating some of the major limitations of the study. However, I think it is inappropriate to discuss strengths in the same section as limitations. Perhaps best to address limitations only.

In the section "comparison with existing literature" the authors assert they … 'found no other studies describing how GPs assess self-care ability in patients with one or multiple chronic conditions." However, Sinnott and colleagues published a systematic review titled "GPs' perspectives on the management of patients with multimorbidity: systematic review and synthesis of qualitative research" in BMJ Open (2013), readily available as an open access article. The included studies were conducted in seven countries: Belgium, England, Germany, Ireland, Scotland, The Netherlands and the USA. A total of 275 GPs were involved; five studies used focus groups and five used interviews with individual GPs.

I commend the authors for addressing an important health concern for patients with multimorbid chronic conditions. However, while this manuscript has the potential to make an important contribution to the literature, some improvement in the writing, analysis procedure description, and overall presentation, including addressing the aforementioned issues, is warranted. Of particular concern is the omission of works that came before on the same topic, e.g., Sinnott et al.'s systematic review from 2013.

**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.

Unable to assess

**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.

I am able to assess the statistics
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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