Reviewer's report

Title: Safety in Primary Care (SAP-C): A randomised, controlled feasibility study in two different healthcare systems

Version: 1 Date: 17 Aug 2018

Reviewer: Claire Collins

Reviewer's report:

I consider that this paper makes a useful contribution to the literature on patient safety in primary care.

Title

Consider more informative title - e.g. Safety in Primary Care (SAP-C): A randomised, controlled feasibility study in Ireland.

Abstract

Page 3 Line 13-14: For clarity, consider adding 'only' to this sentence e.g. For control practices, SC was measured at baseline and study end only. Alternatively, edit the preceding sentences outlining the intervention in order to more clearly distinguish the data collection aspects in the intervention group.

This feasibility study suggests that a definitive randomised controlled trial of the intervention is warranted

Background

Page 4 Line 9:

'This is particularly concerning as GPs have reported several barriers to monitoring patient safety, and difficulties in understanding how to improve patient safety in practice'

It would be helpful to explain what are considered to be the main barriers and difficulties for GPs in monitoring patient safety.
Method

Page 6 Line 20/Page 6. Clarity required around the sampling size. Why did you aim for 8 practices in ROI and 2 in NI? Did you have to ask 11 in ROI in order to get 8 i.e. 3 refused? Why did you initially take 9 practices in RI if you were aiming for 8? Did you invite only 2 in NI and both agreed to participate. Why/what calculation determined this number?

Page 8 Line 6: Can you specify the total number here.

Page 9 Lines 12-14: The section describing the interviews should be expanded, because there is not enough information about the interviews, e.g. how long were the interviews, how were they conducted (face to face, telephone) and how were they recorded (was any technology used). How did you determine how many interviews to conduct? You conducted between 1 and three interviews in each practice - how many in total? What decided how many in each practice?

Page 9 Line 24: The data analysis section does not specify if any technology used during descriptive and interview analysis. Did you use any data management software during analysis, if yes, which one? Why was the framework method chosen for the qualitative analysis?

Page 11 Line 3: Suggest you insert the work 'staff here: The SC staff questionnaire response rate…

Results

Page 12 Line 5-7: The percentages reflected in this section are not as per Table 2. How did you obtain these percentages?

Page 13 Line 6-11: This area could be more specific and clear. Consider if more definitive wording is appropriate e.g. replace - 'considered' and 'believed' with 'agreed'/'strongly agreed' phrases.

Check '66.6% agreed that it had a positive effect on patient safety' - should this not be 40.7%?

'73.7% considered it worth evaluating as a randomised controlled trial' - elsewhere it is 74%.

Page 13 Line 15: How many respondents provided open-ended responses?
Page 14-15: It is usual in this journal to give some indication of source of quotations e.g. using: letters/numbers (Participant A, Participant B), pseudonyms (Peter, Jenny), or by role (Managerial/Non-managerial).

Page 16 Line 14: Suggest this quotation "asked same basic question in different ways" should read "asked same basic questions in different ways"

Discussion

Please insert all sub headings as per journal author guidance

Page 15 Line 25/Page 16 Line 1: Two different health systems - indicate here is this is the same in both.

Page 16 Line 9-12: Sentence is very long; suggest split into two sentences.

Page 16 Line 19: Please indicate if you are suggesting this should be mandatory for all practices or those in your trial.

Page 18 Line 18: Comment here on whether this can be repeated in the trial given GDPR and Health Regulation changes or if changes required in this regard.

Overall

Some punctuation (full stops) needed at the end of statements and for some references.
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.

Yes

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:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

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If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests in relation to this paper or the related project. However, I am a member of the advisory group of the Primary Care Clinical Trials Network although I had not direct involvement on an advisory or other capacity in relation to this project, which was supported by the network.

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