Author’s response to reviews

Title: Development and validation of measurement tools for user experience evaluation surveys in the public primary health care facilities in Greece: a mixed methods study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed for consideration the revised manuscript entitled: “Development and validation of measurement tools for user experience evaluation surveys in the public primary health care facilities in Greece: a mixed methods study” (FAMP-D-18-00211), following the reviewer reports, specific comments and requested revisions delivered to the authoring team on 30 January 2019.

Also, please find below the point-by-point responses to your comments (all relevant changes to the manuscript are indicated in the text by using track changes):

A. Editor Comments:

• The List of abbreviations has been included in the Conclusions section.
• A summary of the informed consent procedure in the Ethics approval and consent to participate statement was added. Also, the full names of all ethics committees that reviewed the study and the relevant reference numbers were included.

• All color and shading has been removed from the tables and format has been altered according to the guidelines.

• Figure titles and legends have been removed from the figure files and have been listed at the end of the manuscript.

B. Reviewer reports William Hogg (Reviewer 1):

Dear Reviewer,

Thank you for your comments, please find below our responses:

₋ In the national and European context the primary health care (PHC) term is also used to describe this sector of services and this is why the authors chose to use it in the manuscript. However, if you think that it should change, please let us know so as to reconsider our decision.

₋ The denominator was the number of patients asked by the field researchers to complete the survey (added in the manuscript).

₋ References are all listed accordingly, following the DECLARATIONS section.

₋ More detail of the ethics reviews were added in the Ethical issues part of the METHODS section and in the DECLARATIONS section.

C. REQUESTED REVISIONS: SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Dear Reviewer,

Thank you for your comments, please find below our responses:

C.1. BACKGROUND
1. References for the statement "In recent years, the interest of both health policy and research stakeholders has centered upon healthcare users' experiences in order to monitor and evaluate the implementation of patient-centered services and whether these fulfill their needs, preferences and values. In the USA, the evaluation of the quality of ambulatory health services for the largest insurance funds has been conducted through surveys and protocols of the CAHPS (Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) and HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness and Data Information Set)." have been added (5, 6 and 7). Also, "fulfill" was changed to "fulfil".

2. The study objective "The aim of this study was to develop a valid and reliable measurement tool for conducting periodic user experience evaluation surveys in public Primary Health Care facilities in Greece such as outpatient clinics of public hospitals and health centers." was added as the last sentence of the Background Section.

C.2. METHODS

The responsiveness questionnaire of the WHO Multi-country Survey Study on Health and Health System's Responsiveness (MCSS) was not included in the literature review of the tools used as the criteria set for this procedure limited our search to the studies and their results conducted within the last decade (see the relevant comment in the RESULTS section, Step 1). However, some of the domains were taken into consideration and adapted to the national context while others did not apply such as "choice of provider" (patient choice of providers).

C.3. RESULTS

The Results Section has been further improved, by noting what constituted the final questionnaire and adding the sub-section “Assessment of item non-response rates, attributed importance to each item and improvement potential” (RESULTS, Step 3):

- The last paragraph of the RESULTS section states that: “Taking into consideration the factor analysis’ results, 6 factors were identified (Accessibility, Continuity and coordination of care, Comprehensiveness of care, Quality of medical care, Facility amenities and Quality of care provided by nurses and other health professionals) and the items included in each one are shown in Table 2”. Therefore, the questions that constituted the final validated questionnaire that should be used for patient survey of PHC services in Greece are listed in Table 2 and the domains covered by the final questionnaire after final analysis are also described in this last paragraph. Also, the final version of the questionnaire has been added as Additional file 3.

- The sub-section “Assessment of item non-response rates, attributed importance to each item and improvement potential” has been added in RESULTS section, Step 3, adding to the differentiation of this tool to others already used in the past as, apart from evaluating experience, it also focused on measuring the importance that patients attach to the various
aspects measured by experience items. These scores did not only help to select the items for the final survey that matter most to patients during development, but also importance scores allowed prioritizing which opportunities for improvement were most important from the patient’s perspective during use and implementation. This was performed by multiplying the percentage negative experiences for each experience item with the importance scores attached to that item. The rationale for that was that since importance scores do not appear to vary much over time or between institutions, it is generally sufficient for decision makers on an institutional and systemic level to measure these scores in a subset of patients once or periodically, and use the results for a number of years, while assessing patients’ experiences.

C.4. DISCUSSION

The Discussion Section has been further improved, by highlighting the domains of care included in the final version of the questionnaire, as a result of an appropriately undertaken development and validation process, and the added value of the inclusion of the patient’s value items for decision makers and facility managers to be able to prioritize the specific aspects of care that present significant levels of improvement potential and therefore, adapt their policies respectively.

This paper has not been published previously and is not under consideration elsewhere. All the authors have contributed significantly to the preparation of this manuscript and that they all agree with its content. The authors are responsible for the reported research, and have participated in the concept and design, analysis and interpretation of data, drafting or revising of the manuscript, and have approved the manuscript as submitted. The data, models, and methodology used in the research are proprietary. Finally, the revised manuscript conforms to the journal style according to the Submission Guidelines on the journal homepage.

Thank you for considering this paper for publication. We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

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