Reviewer's report

Title: Awareness of ADHD in primary care: stakeholder perspectives

Version: 0 Date: 01 Nov 2019

Reviewer: Marjolein Luman

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript entitled 'Awareness of ADHD in primary care: stakeholders perspective'. This manuscript describes semi-structured interviews with multiple stakeholders: GPs, healthcare specialist and patients to address the experiences with presentation and management of ADHD in primary care. Findings show that in general GPs lack knowledge and confidence to recognize and manage ADHD, shortage and complexity of services, and lack of communication between and within stakeholders.

This manuscript studies an important issue in clinical practice, affecting the lives of those with ADHD. The manuscript is well written, presentation of methods and results is clear, and results translate into a clinically relevant discussion and an open educational resource with the aim to address these issues. However, a few points need to be addressed before publication.

First, the rationale for the current study could be improved upon, for which i have the following suggestions. The introduction could profit from a more detailed discussion on the issue of misdiagnosing ADHD. For example, (1) it could be made more clear, whether underdiagnosed ADHD is an issue that is typical for the UK, or whether this reflects a more global issue. Further, (2) there are many studies pointing towards overdiagnosed ADHD in addition to underdiagnosis, suggesting a lack in the reliability (or perhaps validity) of the ADHD classification. Further, (3) studies show clear differences in medication use in children and adolescents with ADHD between countries (see for example the Bachmann paper 2017 published in European Neuropsychopharmacology), with the UK showing relatively low medication rates. Addressing these global differences and possible explanations therefore, would help to increase the rationale and importance of the current paper. Finally, (4) the authors could provide a little more information regarding the UK primary health care system so that the reader understands the rationale for the choice to look only at the perspective of the GPs and not other (local) health services that may refer to secondary care. Are GPs the only gatekeepers?
Regarding the methods: could the authors provide a reference that shows that the current number of participants that reflect the different stakeholders are adequate for this interview method. Did the participants receive a (financial) reward for participation?

As I'm not very familiar with this thematic analytic approach; Although the analytic procedure seems sound, I cannot comment on the data analytic procedure. I only wondered whether the authors could comment on the potential pitfalls of this approach, such as whether the resolved themes overlapped with the questions asked.

Discussion page 17, line 4 says ‘… , the complex communication between all different steps is increased’. Can the authors explain what is meant by this? Increased, because of the multiple disciplines involved? To what extend does this differ from other countries?

I think the discussion could be improved upon if the authors could indicate whether the current findings are specific for the diagnosis and management of ADHD or whether these issues are problematic across the psychiatric domain (i.e., regarding GP training; experienced stigma; or access to care).

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 recommend additional statistical review
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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