Reviewer's report

Title: Purchasing and Using Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS): How Decisions are Made by Community-Dwelling Seniors in Canada

Version: 3 Date: 30 April 2014

Reviewer: Paula van Wyk

Reviewer's report:

Dear Authors,

I enjoyed reading your manuscript and perceive it to be valid research. However, prior to publication I feel that the manuscript can be improved and strengthened from the current version. Below are some of my suggestions to help strengthen the quality of your manuscript.

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS

1. There are several locations in which the sentence structure and grammar is poor or weak. Please take the time to more thoroughly edit the paper.
   a. Page 3: “As seniors age, they may face more…”
   b. Page 3: “… there are many challenges to staying in their own home.” Such as?
   c. Page 4: “There have, however, been…” the use of the word however lacks a purpose in this opening sentence.
   d. Page 4: “In a randomized control trail..” Is it of importance to know that this study was conducted in Alberta Canada? If not, please remove from the sentence. If it is of importance, please explain the relevance.
   e. Page 4: “The authors found that…” delete the beginning of this sentence and start with “There was …”
   f. Page 4: Is the fact that Porter conducted a study or series of studies important? I would tend to think what was done and what was found was more important. Also, making the statement “qualitative studies” may not come across to some as acceptable as “quantitative studies” would not appear in other manuscripts. It would be of interest to know about the types of studies conducted, however. Thus, perhaps include more information.
   g. Page 4: “Whatever the overall…” please revise.
   h. Page 4: “How do individuals become PERS users?” – How do individuals become users of PERS?
   i. Page 5: “major urban centre” drop/delete unnecessary adjectives such as major in this case.
   j. Page 5: “To recruit participants, notices were... serves this community…” serves the target community.
k. Page 5: “also” appears multiple times.
l. Page 7: “As themes emerge...” – emerged.
m. Page 8: “To ensure transferability...writing the thesis...” – please revise.
n. Page 10: “Most participants reported subscribing themselves to a PERS, but most also reported...” please revise.
o. Page 10: “past physical events such as falls, heart attacks and seizures also...” the also is not needed.
p. Page 10: “In addition, some seniors had heard...” – In addition, concern among seniors increased after being exposed to the experiences shared by a neighbor or a friend in which they were unable to get up...
q. Page 10: last sentence does not clearly link up to the quote found on Page 11.
r. Page 11: “This theme...” Which theme? This entire paragraph seems repetitive. Consider removing.
s. Page 11: “(ii) the necessity of living with a PERS to remain independent by reducing THE fear...”
t. Page 12: “Most participants also knew where the device was when they weren’t...” please revise.
u. Page 13: “Participant F15...” - ... and then another heart attack. She recounts....knew” (Participant F15).
v. Page 14: Self-diagnosis and seriousness section – please revise
w. Page 16: This study added” – adds
x. Page 16: “… aware of the unpredictable nature of their health etc.,” please revise.
y. Page 16: “In addition, the study has shed some light on...” – In addition, exposure to the decision... many feel about do so was explored.
z. Page 16: “qualitative data analysis” – please me more specific.
aa. Page 16: beginning with “Although PERS literature...” – There is a paucity of literature that has focused on the experience of have a PERS [11] and the intentions of using a PERS [12]. The current study expends upon previous studies by identifying the theme of unpredictability. This theme emerged as a main contextual condition from the perspective of individuals in advanced old age... adverse outcomes. This theme lends support to PERS playing an important role in the accessibility of assistance for seniors and provides... peace of mind, therefore introducing an element...
bb. Page 16: “Porter’s [12]” – A phenomenological study involving eight ... the experience of having a PERS. [12] It was determined that ... living alone. [12] The present study demonstrated that being able to get help within a realm of unpredictable adverse circumstances was a main theme...
c. Page 17: “the participant’s” ... a participant’s
dd. Page 17: “Unpredictability sets the stage for PERS use.” Delete.
ee. Page 17: PERS and Unpredictability section, please revise. Currently reads very choppy.

ff. Page 17: “The perception of others….” – please revise

gg. Page 18: Paragraph at the top of the page, please revise.

hh. Page 18: “PERS use is influenced by an individual’s level...” – perceived risk and who initiated the subscription of the device (e.g. the user themselves, a child or veteran’s...)

ii. Page 19 – Conclusions. There are several areas of poor grammar and weak sentence structure. Please revise. Furthermore, the conclusion could be improved with a more profound concluding statement rather than trailing off with potential future areas of study.

2. Page 1: “Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) are...” Please provide a reference. The second paragraph of the background also appears to be lacking references.

3. Page 1: the flow between the first paragraph and the second should be improved. Currently it reads as very choppy without a conclusive thought at the end of the first paragraph.

4. Page 4: The last sentence begins to discuss Grounded theory. This is applauded. However, the manuscript would benefit from additional information as to why GT is appropriate for this study. As a standalone statement, the sentence itself currently seems “thrown in”.

5. Page 5 & 6: several locations in which a reference is missing. It is suggested that the entire section is revisited. Perhaps organizing in subsections of focus group and then interviews may create better flow. The last sentence regarding transcription belongs in the Data Analysis section. In the Data Analysis section information is provided about memoing that may be have a better fit within data collection.

6. Page 9: How is it that you are able to report that 76.7% of the participants reported being “usually satisfied or extremely satisfied” or “strongly or somewhat agreed” if you had focus groups or interviews? Perhaps this refers back to the needed revision for the data collection section.

7. Figure 1 (Page 10): please ensure the quality of the figure – currently there is overlapping prohibiting the clarity of text.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS

1. The title implies that the manuscript will be related to the purchasing and use of PERS. Furthermore the manuscript does not actually address HOW decisions are made. An alternative, more appropriate title is suggested.

2. Page 3: The acronym ERC is not needed as it does not appear elsewhere in the manuscript

3. Page 4: “Falls are cited as a major reason...” Are falls themselves cited or is it the fear of falls?

4. Page 4: “Under what circumstances do seniors view it acceptable...” This
comes across as quite a leading question by already making the implication that push the PERS button is a negative event. It is best to state questions with neutrality. It is then in the responses and the data that a positive or negative perception should emerge.

5. Page 4: Methods – “To explore the process of an older adult..” please be consistent with either senior or older adult in manuscript. (on page 17 you introduce “very old individuals)

6. Data Collection – Was there only one researcher present for the focus groups? If so, why was there not a second person present to take notes regarding speaker order, body language, tone, etc... If there was a second person present, please provide this information.

7. Data Analysis – was only one researcher involved in the coding?

8. Were the people interviewed the same people from the focus group or additional participants?

9. How representative of the population who subscribe to PERS is the population included in the study?

10. How was self-related independence determined?

11. Page 8: For the participants who pressed the button 25 times – was this from retrospective memory? Database resource? In the nine situations that resulted in a trip to the hospital, how many participants were repeats of going to the hospital?

12. Page 9: “In addition to medical emergencies, break-ins or fires….were there cases in which a button was pressed for these scenarios? If not, this may be more of a discussion point than belonging in results.

13. Whenever “Connect Care” is listed, would it be beneficial to indicate a [PERS] instead to avoid listing specific products or providers?

14. Page 9: “Thematic saturation was reached by the end of the five focus groups with no new topics emerging.” Beautifully stated.

15. Participant M21 or Participant F22: M= male and F= female? For clarity either state in advance the “codes” or just indicate full words.

16. Page 11: “…as participants could not be sure when an emergency or fall might occur.” As well all fall, would it be more correct to state an injury or an injurious fall?

17. Page 11: Paragraph beginning with “Within Theme 1, two…” could benefit from more detail and better flow. The current version is choppy.


19. Page 12: Paragraph beginning with “As part of their regular routines” could benefit from more detail.

20. For the sake of consistency it is requested that all participant quotes are indented (preferred) or that they are all within the paragraph.

21. Page 13: “These conditions are discussed below.” As this is the results
section it may be best not to use the word discussed but rather reported.

22. Page 14: Awareness and Accessibility – is there a quote to illustrate the last sentence?

23. Page 15: the paragraph beginning with “To enter the decision-making process” seems repetitive.

24. Page 17: “… alter one's PHYSICAL environment”

25. Page 17: Why is the term unexpected now being used when unpredictable has been used throughout the manuscript?

26. Page 18: “The daily routines…” this sentence does not flow. Uncertain of the purpose of this sentence within this paragraph.


28. Study limitations – to the community dwelling SENIORS, please add that it was from an urban setting. Also, what are some of the methodological limitations – for example what are the limitations associated with the primary researcher conducting the transcriptions (which you can then counter by the benefits of this scenario).

DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS

1. When using the term 'health care' (e.g. health care professionals), consider revising to healthcare.

2. Page 5: The study was approved by the …” perhaps consider revising to avoid the use of the university name to ensure more anonymity for participants.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declared that I have no competing interests