Reviewer’s report

Title: Video-calls to reduce loneliness and social isolation within care environments for older people: an implementation study using collaborative action research.

Version: 0 Date: 14 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Maria-Victoria Zunzunegui,

Reviewer’s report:

This paper assesses the feasibility and acceptability of family video calls to reduce loneliness and social isolation of older adults in care homes and hospitals. The paper also aims at defining the best target population for this intervention, collecting information to improve the design features of the video calls equipment and identifying barriers and facilitators for the intervention.

The introduction is well written and provides the rationale for the proposed intervention. The methods are well explained and the results describe in depth the research findings with sufficient details. However, parts of the discussion and conclusions are not entirely supported by the results.

The paper would improve if some contextual information was provided regarding the care homes and the staff working conditions, their resident population and the average resident-family interaction. More specifically:

a) A description of the care homes: number of residents, number of staff members, staff turnover, staff average education and or qualification, average hourly staff wages compared with minimum salary.

b) A description of the older resident population: average age, disability status, cognitive status, average number of chronic conditions or average number of medications, percentage of residents that gets weekly family visits, percentage of residents that did not receive family visits in the last three months or any given time period.

Recommendations for further research on this topic should be very explicit in the discussion and conclusion sections and they should include comments towards a better characterization of staff skills and working conditions, selection criteria to define the appropriate target population of older adults and more in depth data collection on each potential participant's availability and quality of family networks and support.

The conclusion should state clearly that: institutional and older adults' participation was low, implementation was not possible in four out of the eight study settings which had accepted to participate, there was considerable lack of engagement of families and lack of motivation of the care homes staff to complete the study procedures.

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.

No

**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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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