Author’s response to reviews

Title: Barriers and facilitators to implementing Dementia Care Mapping in Care Homes: results from the DCM™ EPIC Trial process evaluation

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Reviewer reports:

Reviewer 1

My first comment on the interviews with residents and relatives is not answered satisfactory.

Why could they not answer your questions? What was the value of conducting these interviews? What do you recommend for future research with residents and relatives on this topic?

Thank you for the opportunity to clarify our thoughts around this. We felt that it was incredibly important to conduct interviews with residents and relatives as they are the people who the intervention is designed to improve the life of. However, as highlighted, generally they were not able to comment on the barriers and facilitators to intervention delivery. We have added the following to the discussion section:

“To date, no studies of DCM™ implementation have interviewed residents or relatives, therefore we were unsure how well they would be able to contribute to our understanding of intervention
implementation. Our findings suggest that many residents and relatives remain largely unaware of ongoing interventions in care homes even when participating in a trial of the intervention. However, their awareness may also have been affected by poor implementation and/or a failure in some care homes to involve residents or relatives in the DCM process. As the involvement of relatives and residents is key in practice change in long term care [e.g. 19], this may account for some of the lack of success. In addition residents with dementia experienced difficulties in recalling past events and experiences of interest in the process evaluation. Future care home trials incorporating a process evaluation should consider using researchers independent of the trial to enable concurrent collection of trial and process data during intervention implementation; this may increase opportunities for residents and relatives to comment on the intervention and its effects as they occur."