Reviewer’s report

Title: Non-Spouse Companions Accompanying Older Adults to Medical Visits: A Qualitative Analysis

Version: 2 Date: 12 Aug 2018

Reviewer: Bernadette Bartlam

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for attending to previous comments. Unfortunately, there are a large number of substantive comments from reviewer 2 that you have not sufficiently addressed:

Comment 4: you have provided more detail in the text response, but not within the manuscript itself. You say you have "added further details" but these amount to 2 brief sentences only. The details on the collaboration with the Director of THREAD would add important detail, as would paying attention to the advice in the comment.

Comments 5 and 6: you provide clarity in your textual response but this clarity remains absent within the analysis section of the manuscript, e.g. saying " followed by a group meeting of team members" says nothing about the analysis process itself.

Comment 7: This remains unclear within the manuscript, including the order in which the analysis stages you do outline took place which is confused. Were unique identifiers and the relationship of the MVC's to the patients only established at the end of the analysis? If so what was the rationale for this? When and how did the coding team reach consensus on codes and themes? How was reliability checked across the coding pairs? When you met as a group in the early stage of analysis, the issue of how themes emerged still remains unclear - please clarify how team members other than AGP familiarised themselves with the data in order to agree the themes - at the moment it reads as though they relied on the interpretation by AGP - it is not sufficient to say 'reviewed the transcripts during the day'. Did they do this through detailed reading, independent coding (which sort/level) etc... It still remains unclear whether the 4 coders are the entire team, and if not what the role of other team members was in the process (if any).

Comment 8: It is not sufficient to acknowledge that the term 'validity' was inappropriate and remove it - the concept of reliability/trustworthiness and the steps taken to support this need to be documented, particularly in terms of implications for data saturation. See for example Saunders, B et al, 2018: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8.
Comment 9: you have missed the point of this comment which asked that you indicate how race and culture were accounted for much earlier in the research process (if they were).

Comment 10: You have not sufficiently addressed the issue of data saturation. For example, there is no indication of whether or not on-going analysis and emerging findings dictated the number of focus groups, or what the relationship was between analysis and data collection - see Saunders paper above.

Comment 17: There is no indication in the manuscript of how you have incorporated the systematic reporting guidelines suggested.

Unfortunately, the account of the analysis as a whole remains lacking in detail, as does the process of data collection (see reviewer 2 comments in detail and also my further responses above), and in particular how these inter-related, and the implications for data saturation and consequently the reliability/trustworthiness of your findings.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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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