Reviewer's report

Title: Feasibility of Peer Support Services among People with Severe Mental Illness in China

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Reviewer: D Keith McInnes

Reviewer's report:

The article addresses an important topic: peer support for mental illness in countries outside of Western countries. The study involved semi-structured interviews with peer service providers and consumers (persons with serious mental illness - SMI)

Methods:

1. It would be helpful to explain what was involved in the training received by the peer service providers (five 1/2-day sessions)

2. There were an unanticipated need to do the study in two waves, due to difficulties with getting services provided to enough consumers. There were 2 initial communities involved, and then later on another 2 communities were added. The potential biases introduced by this should be noted in the limitations section.

Results:

1. There is some inconsistency in use of terms, sometimes it is "peer service provider", other times "service provider". I suggest always using the former because the latter could be confused with psychologists, psychiatrists, etc.

2. While it was important to clearly describe how there ended up being 2 phases to the study (unanticipated) with 2 initial communities, then a gap of 6 or so months, and then 2 additional communities, I don't believe the differences require splitting the results out in this manner. I suggest that that detailed analysis be put in an online supplement table, but in the main manuscript consolidate the results from all 4 communities. As long as this is all spelled out in the methods, and the reader has the option to find the detailed table, that will suffice. Most readers will, I believe, will appreciate the more consolidated results.

Discussion:

1. A limitations section should be added. There are quite a few, some of which are mentioned in the Discussion, but not in an easy to find paragraph or section that has all the limitations laid out.

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.

Unable to assess

**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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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