Reviewer’s report

Title: Understanding work-related sharps injuries in home healthcare: A qualitative methods study to identify pathways for injury prevention

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Reviewer: Getahun Kebede Beyera

Reviewer’s report:

Overall the manuscript has been not well written. Furthermore, my comments are presented as follows:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Title: Understanding work-related sharps injuries in home healthcare: is that injury to health care providers or injury to those who receive the care or to the general community or to all of the above??? because the phrase “work-related injury” could be used only for health care providers. Otherwise, you could not use this phrase for those who receive the care and for general community since the injury is not because of their occupation.

2. Under background of abstract section (line 25-32) you are expected to indicate summary of major public health problems related to work-related sharps injuries and the existing gaps. However, what you showed here is what you did in this study and in your previous study instead of depicting the aforementioned points. Therefore, this should be totally changed.

3. In abstract section, conclusion is not consistent with the result. You have to revise these sections again.

4. Our objective was to identify factors affecting sharps safety......... (Line 98 to 103) do you think this objectives are part of the general objective?????? “We employed qualitative research methods to create........ [5, 11, 14] (Line 100 to 103) is this objective or method you employed to conduct the study????? Frankly speaking this is a method. Otherwise, by any means it could not be an objective of the study. The other thing is how do you cite references for the objective?????????? What is the importance of writing funding agencies here???????? Please remove it from here.

5. In-depth interviews were conducted during June 2011– April 2013 to.......(line 107) is that possible to conduct in-depth interview for almost 2 years???????????

6. The participant recruitment was purposive – a snowball sampling......... (line 112) “Purposive sampling” and snowball sampling” are two independent non probability sampling methods. Therefore, you have to be clear that which sampling method you used while recruiting your study participants. Did you use both methods?????? if so, why??????

7. HHC clinicians are covered by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard which requires the use
of engineering and work practice controls to eliminate or minimize bloodborne pathogen exposures among employees [15] (line 155 to 157). Result should be your findings rather than something taken from other sources.

8. At least two states – California (2008) and Massachusetts (2012) – have banned sharps in household waste and require special disposal [16, 17]. This seems discussion rather than your finding.

9. Our findings show the reality and complexity of sharps use in the home environment, including the prevalence of sharps re-use among self-injectors (line 330-331). Did your study show the prevalence of sharps re-use among self-injectors? If so, where is that result? Remember that it is impossible to determine prevalence through qualitative study.

10. In table 1 you considered elimination and substitution as different from engineering method of prevention. But, both elimination and substitution are specific examples of engineering method of injury prevention. Please, revise it again.

11. Do you think all information depicted in discussion section is documented in the result section? Because, what you discuss should be what is found in your result.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. “Home healthcare providers are covered by………. (line no 44 to 46) is not the finding of your study. It should be removed.
2. Our objective was ……..(Line 98) should be changed to “the objective of this study was………..”.
3. In our previous survey study…….. (line 75). Since the words “survey” and “study” contextually have the same meaning, you should use either of the two.
4. Interview protocols were approved by the University’s Institutional Review Board (line 119). Which University?? Please, specify it.
5. These, too, were coded……..(line 131) punctuation error should be corrected. Such errors should be corrected throughout the document.

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

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 declare that I have no competing interests.