Reviewer's report

Title: Motives of elderly to accept vaccination

Version: 3
Date: 28 January 2015

Reviewer: Iman Ridda

Reviewer's report:

Reviewer's comments

General comments:

The manuscript entitled "Motives of elderly to accept vaccination" by Eilers R et al. Describes results of a qualitative study to assess some of the decision to accept or reject a vaccination. The authors performed open-ended interviews among people aged 50 years or older and concluded that the most prevalent barriers to vaccination is the absence of perceived susceptibility.

I think that the main interest of this paper is not only their results (which interest is basically local) but its methodology. Qualitative studies are scarce and they can provide an alternative and very interesting point of view to know and analyse attitudes and comportments of the patients in relation to preventive interventions or treatments compliance.

I think that this paper can be published after a minor essential revisions, and this journal provides an appropriate forum.

Specific Comments:

• Title; I suggest that the title informs about the setting of the study.
• People aged 50 years are not elderly! Provide justification why you have included people at this age and not 65 years as the universal norm for the older adult’s term.
• Replace the word “elderly” with “older adults” across the whole paper
• Check grammar and punctuations throughout the paper

Abstract:

The methods needs to be rewritten; was there a difference in the group …etc.

I would suggest the following “Thirteen focus groups were conducted, Their responses to semi-structured open-ended questions regarding perceived motives to vaccination were analyzed using ……..”

Introduction:

• First paragraph, give demographics about people aged 50 not 65 as this is the age group you are including in your study.
• Line 50, not only socially engaged there are outbreaks in nursing homes and hospitals as well
• Please remove the following sentence “Therefore, infectious diseases are expected to become more prevalent among the elderly”. Not all/only older adult susceptible to infectious diseases
• Line 53, reference the following “vaccination may yield social benefits such as lower overall costs of healthcare.
• Line 56, not sure if you meant the vaccine is provided free of charge to people aged 60 years as I know flu vaccine is recommended to all ages. Having said that, I am not sure about the reason including 50 years participants in this study. Please provide some justification
• Use a defined aim separately and rewrite it something like “explore reasons behind vaccine acceptance and refusals in older adults in the Netherlands”

Methods:
Please add as an attachment the questions that have been asked during the sessions
• How did the authors approach designated areas for recruitment? Letters? Email? Mail? … please be specific about the method for recruitment, how many approached and how many accepted to participate
• Sheltered housing institutions, care homes are two different groups and this could be a confounding factor, because older adults in care homes are at higher risk of falling ill and have more contact with healthcare providers that could make them more receptive to receive recommended immunizations. This should be comment in the discussion section.
• Line 76, what is the enclosed application form? You could change to consent form/agreement form …
• Line 85, remove “topic list with”
• Line 86, remove the word “argument” replace it with opinion…
• Line97, remove the word “argument” and replace it with opinion, thoughts, ideas …

Results:
Line 115, Replace “The results will be presented’ with “the results are presented”

Discussion:
The discussion could be improved; for example, the authors do not discuss anything about separate vaccines (influenza vax, pneumo vax …etc…) as people perceive them differently; for some people they don’t even know about the vaccine. Also the role of health care providers recommendations was not mentioned which is a very important issue.
• Line 430, needs referencing
• Line, 459, change to influenza vaccine
• Replace personal information with demographics

There is no ethics approval? I can see you have provided an email copy stating that ethics approval is not required but we don’t know from who that email was sent as it does not have a signature. Please provide a formal letter in this regards from your ethics department and attach it as an appendix

Was the study funded? How did the authors pay the participants? Should be declared

Thank you and good luck with your submission

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

Iman Ridda was supported by Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grant and has received grant funds for investigator-driven research from GSK and for consultation from Merck for vaccine related research.