Reviewer’s report

Title: Acceptability and potential impact of delivering sexual health promotion information through social media and dating apps to MSM in England: A qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 15 May 2019

Reviewer: Lloyd A. Goldsamt

Reviewer's report:

This paper presents data from a qualitative study of the provision of sexual health information to MSM via social media and dating apps. The qualitative sampling and analytic methods are acceptable, and the findings presented are interesting and relevant to the research question. The paper does, however, require some additional methodological details in order to fully understand the methods and results of the study.

Most importantly, there is insufficient information provided regarding the coding and analysis of data. As written, it appears that a single author (JK) did all of the coding, and that the study team discussed the codes and coding, although it is also stated that two coders (PW and JK) discussed the coding independently of the study team. This does not appear to be a valid method of coding qualitative data. The authors should describe who coded the transcripts (after the primary codes were developed), how many people coded each transcript, the reliability of the coding, and how disagreements were resolved.

There is also some confusion about the sampling. The authors describe the recruitment sources for 40 respondents, and the reason that interviews were not conducted with 15 of these respondents. However, it is also important to know which sources the actual data came from, especially since there are both social media (Facebook) and dating app (Scruff, Grindr) sources of recruitment. The issue of the different types of recruitment sources may also merit some discussion, as it seems likely that the two types of sources may differ in the types of respondents they provide. If the findings were not source-dependent, the authors should state this.

Finally, there are several instances in the paper where the authors present additional interpretations of data without examples of the actual narrative data. This occurs at the end of section 1 (Uses and impacts of sexual health information) and the end of section 3 (Attitudes toward sexual health information provision via dating apps). The paper would be stronger if data supporting these conclusions is included.

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.

Yes

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:

Acceptable

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