Author's response to reviews

Title: Role models in a preventive program for hand eczema among healthcare workers: a qualitative exploration of their main tasks and associated barriers and facilitators.

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We would like to thank the reviewer for the constructive comments. Below we will respond to each point and we will show how we improved the manuscript. The changed text is highlighted in blue.
Reviewer 1

1. The references to the quotes in the text could be clearer (now the numbers in ordinary brackets could easily be mistaken for literature references); for example at page 6 after “Characteristics and quotes of the participants are shown in table 1.” you could add a sentence like “In the following quote numbers from table 1 are given in square brackets” – and in the text [Table 1, Quote 1] etc.

Response: Thank you for pointing this out. We added the sentence “In the following text quote numbers from table 1 are given in square brackets”. In the text, we changed all ordinary brackets into square brackets, so that the numbers can not be mistaken for literature references. Quotes are now followed by: [Table 1, Quote …].

2. Some quotes has just been moved to the table, others are still in the text. I suggest that you go through the text part and consider carefully where to add a few word on the essence of the quotes, that have been moved to table 1; and for the remaining choose where it would be better also the have a short rewritten summary of the quote integrated in your presentation.

Response: We agree with the reviewer and carefully considered in which paragraphs further information was needed about the essence of the quotes. In several cases, we added few words to the text part. Furthermore, we included the reviewer’s suggestions among the text on page 7 and page 11. The improved sentences are shown below:

In many cases, the role models agreed with their manager about repeating the information on hand eczema regularly during meetings in order to keep focus on the topic [Table 1, Quote 1].

In addition, participants noticed that it was important that their tone was not demanding because that did not fit with their personality or their role at the department [Table 1, Quote 2].

To be a good example for their colleagues was found to be another task of the role models, as they believed that this was needed to convince their colleagues [Table 1, Quote 3].

This was often done when ‘unhealthy hand behaviour’ like not using moisturizer was noticed by the role model [Table 1, Quote 4].

Acknowledging the need for the prevention of hand eczema as this might be a barrier to continue working was seen as an internal facilitator [Table 1, Quote 8].

The manager illustrated why the role of role model was difficult for a young employee [Table 1, Quote 11]:

A manager explained that when one worker at his department was suddenly titled as a ‘coach’, this was not always accepted by his colleagues because they did not understand why they were not chosen [Table 1, Quote 14].

In departments where there was a colleague suffering from hand eczema, the problem was recognized by colleagues. One participant noticed how hand eczema among her colleague increased the awareness at the department [Table 1, Quote 18];
Two or more role models within a department, was described as a facilitator because they could support each other. A participant explained [Table 1, Quote 20]: ‘It was sometimes really nice to be with the two of us, because when one of us was silent, the other one could come up with other nice arguments.’

The availability of study related material like flyers and leaflets about hand eczema, was experienced as a facilitator for performing the role. A participant explained that the role models used flyers to make their colleagues aware of the impact of hand eczema [Table 1, Quote 21].

This was the case when employees were attainable in case of a small department for example, when there was a culture of speaking up and/or a dynamic atmosphere and when the workers of the department were used to paying attention to new projects [Table 1, Quote 22].

Several role models explained that the prevention of hand eczema was not relevant for the department because it was not a major issue at that moment [Table 1, Quote 23].

3. Minor correction:
   Page 13, the new paragraph: ‘…might have the potentio …’ / Do you mean: ‘…might have the potential …’?

Response: Yes, we meant ‘might have the potential’. We have changed this on page 13 of the manuscript.