Reviewer's report

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.

Version: 2 Date: 13 March 2015

Reviewer: Mari-Ann Flyvholm

Reviewer's report:

A relevant study considering important aspects of the implementation of workplace interventions on hand eczema. It is based on a primary study (Hands4U) testing a multifaceted implementation strategy on prevention of hand eczema in health care workers – the study population for the present study is recruited among key participants called 'role models' from the primary study. The reported findings include the experiences of the 'role models' and the perceived barriers and facilitators. The discussion and conclusion are well presented, but the description of results/findings is rather long and hard to read. The manuscript could be shortened and improved and the presentation of the results would be easier to follow if quotes were organised in a table together with an overview on characteristics of each 'role model' and their department. See comments and suggestions below.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   > Yes

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   > Partly; I suggest more information on the total number of departments and role models in the primary study

3. Are the data sound?
   > They seem to be although the presentation could be improved.

4. Do the figures appear to be genuine, i.e. without evidence of manipulation?
   > n.a. / the description seems, but difficult to judge in this type of studies

5. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   > Yes

6. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   > Yes
7. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
> Partly; see suggestions

8. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
> More relevant references are available; see comments below

9. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
> Yes

10. Is the writing acceptable?
> The writing is acceptable; however, the manuscripts could be shortened and thus improved.

Comments and suggestions:

Background, page 4, line 4:
You write “Although role models often play an important role in interventions, research on their experiences is scarce” – I think you miss some references here: The performance and experiences of role models/ change agents/ resource persons in interventions on occupational skin diseases have been studied in other wet work settings; see for example Mygind et al, A study of the implementation process of an intervention to prevent work-related skin problems in wet-work occupations. Int Arch Occup Environ Health 2006; 79: 66-74. Other Danish studies on healthcare workers can be found in the reference list of this paper.

Background, page 4, line 23:
I suggest you use more recent references as the prevalence of occupational skin diseases has changed over time; your reference #11 and #12 are more than 10 year old (2003 and 2001) and the data included probably older.

Methods, page 5:
More information on the original study is needed here; for example the number of departments included in the primary study and text on how/why you ended up with the number of participants in the present study. Although this may be found in reference #17, the most important information is needed here, too.

Findings (Results?) page 6 -13:
The many quotes in the ‘Findings’ section (seven pages in the manuscript) make the text hard to read and make it difficult to get an overview of the results. I suggest to organize the quotes in a more comprehensive table (maybe instead of table 1 and table 2) and concentrate on the important aspects in the text-part (see for example table 5 in Mygind et al, 2006). This will give the reader a possibility to get an overview of the results...

This table could also include an overview on characteristics of each of the 19
‘role models’ and their departments (i.e. the text in parenthesis following each quote in the present version of the manuscript is rather long). Such a table would make it easier for the reader to follow and compare results from the same department or ‘role model’ and to compare different departments or ‘role models’.

Discussion, page 15, line 22-25:
Unclear, please rewrite

Discussion, page 16, line 6:
I suggest that you also mention training the ‘role models’ on peer-to-peer coaching.

Strengths and limitations, page 16, line 9:
Please consider the study by Mygynd et al. from 2006 and modify the sentence “This is the first study that examined facilitators and barriers experienced by the role models …”

Strengths and limitations, page 16, line 16-25:
It is a limitation that there are no data including the whole group and thus also non-participants. A questionnaire for all ‘role models’ at different stages of the intervention could have provided data on their perception of the project and the training they were getting. If you have course evaluation from the educational session they could provide such data.

Conclusion, page 16/17:
I suggest that you also mention better or more comprehensive education/training. From my point of view 1½ hour session (mentioned at page 5, line 15-16) is rather limited.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests