Reviewer’s report

Title: An In-depth Exploration of the Differences between Delivery and Organisation of Dental General Anaesthetic services and treatment in the Northwest England: Part 2. Qualitative analysis

Version: 1
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Reviewer: Tim T Newton

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The aim of this research (from the abstract) is “to understand the impact of such variation (in patterns of service delivery and the organisation of Dental General Anaesthesia) by exploring views and experiences of children and their families receiving care in different hospital sites, as well as dentists involved in referral and delivery of care”. In order to achieve this interviews were conducted with 26 individuals comprising 15 patients, 6 dentists in primary care, and 5 dentists delivering DGA services.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Background
The Background section mainly focuses on the role of DGA in patient management in dentistry, and fails to provide any theoretical framework for understanding service delivery and organisation. While somewhat dated the authors might have considered adopting Maxwell’s (1984) dimensions as a basis for addressing the scope of service delivery.

Method
I have concerns about the adoption of a single analytical framework for two groups, which prima facie appear to have very different perspectives on the issue under address. I would need to have considerable more confidence in the method and analysis before I would accept that the two give qualitatively equivalent responses. I have argued elsewhere that patients might only be reasonably expected to comment on four of Maxwell’s dimensions (Newton 2001).

While we are told that the original intention was to sample ‘purposively’ – we are not told to what purpose. If we assume it is to meet the aim, then we would assume that the sampling would be based on individuals who had experienced different types of service, or who had experience of contrasting services. Similarly we might expect individuals involved in the design of service delivery and organisation to be interviewed. However I can’t see how these can be seen as a single group – surely they are answering from different perspectives? For example I fail to see how the same interview schedule can be given to patients, and dentists.
There is insufficient information presented on the method of analysis. There is one line which provides insufficient detail to replicate the analysis “analysis involved a variety of techniques including constant comparison to elicit common themes and look for unusual cases”.

Discussion and Conclusions
The authors might wish to reflect on the possible bias introduced by their own role when conducting interviews, in line with good practice in qualitative research.

Overall I think that this manuscript would benefit from use of the CASP guidance to guide the reporting of the conduct, analysis and discussion.

http://media.wix.com/ugd/dded87_951541699e9edc71ce66c9bac4734c69.pdf


Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.