Reviewer’s report

Title: Designing and developing a co-produced theoretical and evidence-based online support for family caregivers of people with dementia at the end of life

Version: 0 Date: 27 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Solomon S. Liao

Reviewer's report:

This paper addresses an interesting and important topic. I hope my comments and suggestions will help the authors improve the manuscript.

General Comments: The paper is too long and needs to be drastically reduced in size. Many redundancies can be eliminated, particularly between the background section and the discussion section. Similarly, obvious comments can be removed. The background section is entirely too long. Much of it could and should be reduced. For example, the phase 1 and phase 2 paragraphs could be shortened to 1 or 2 sentences at the most, since they have already been published elsewhere. There are too many figures. These figures could be replaced with the website links.

Specific Comments:
Line 257: please add the inclusion and exclusion criteria
Line 259: definitions do exist for end stage dementia.
Line 263: how was bereavement defined? Please clarify
Line 265: how much cognitive impairment? Please clarify
Line 331: no need to keep telling the reader that detailed notes were taken.
Line 333: similarly no need to tell the reader that feedback was obtained from some members by email when they were not available in person.
Line 530: This is another example of an obvious statement.
Line 540: There is no need to tout the strengths of the study.
Line 600: please add other weaknesses, such as the lack of definition of end stage dementia and small sample size, small n.
Lines 602 to 607 are unnecessary and not helpful. I suggest deleting

Conclusion: I think much more work, including a follow up validation study needs to be done before this methodology or process can be held up as an example for future internet-based interventions for other health conditions. I suggest changing the conclusion to let the readers know what future work needs to be done in this area and that validation is still needed.

Table 1 is too complicated and unnecessarily detailed. Please consolidated, for example, mean age, how many females, spouse vs children. Please delete the participant numbers. I don't understand what "age left education" means. Please change this column title or add a foot note. Please delete the blank row for participant C021.
Table 2 does not contribute much and is much too large. I suggest deleting Figure 1 is too complicated. Please simplify and add a title or description. I suggest reducing the amount of text in each box

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

**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.

I recommend additional statistical review

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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