Reviewer’s report

Title: Volunteers in a biography project with palliative care patients – a feasibility study

Version: 2 Date: 24 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Joe Low

Reviewer's report:

In the last review, Reviewer 1 made useful suggestions for the authors to consider. The authors appeared to have modified their aims in the light of these comments to specifically focus on the feasibility of volunteers delivering a biographical intervention. However, the presentation of the data does not particularly support the three aims that the authors propose and some further work is needed by the authors to ensure that their data reflects the aims of their study.

1) The authors need to ensure the aims reflect the data they present in the results such as acceptability of delivering the intervention, motivation for undergoing training for the training. They present data in the results not reflected not their aims, so authors need to reflect whether they need to add more specific aims to this study and whether this data contributes to evaluating the feasibility of the biographical intervention they describe.

2) In the new aims of the study, the authors discuss that the following: 'Do we have the resources for training, coordination and supervision'. However, following from Reviewer 1 previous point about the delivering the intervention safely and appropriately, nothing is mentioned about how volunteers were assessed in their competency of delivering the therapy, although we are told that volunteers received 14 hr of training. What checks did your supervisory team do to ensure that they were happy that the volunteers were competent to deliver the biography intervention?

3) Results - resources. very limited data to answer the questions about whether there are sufficient resources for training, coordination and supervision

Specific issues:

1) p5 l.104-107 - why is there a subheading 'Aims' is the methods section? This should be integrated into the previous section.

2) p5, l.112-113 - technically, it is wrong to say that there will no exclusions, if all volunteers used needed to have completed their training as a hospice volunteer.
3) p5, l.122-125 - you talk about collecting this quantitative data, but do not discuss this in the results.

4) p6, l.1333 -'à' - do you mean 'at' or 'to'?

5) p6-8, l.150-176 - I am sure that the authors modify this part in response to comments from the previous review, but I am not sure whether the 'evaluation' section needs to be sub-divided. Some of the information presented can be incorporated into earlier sections.

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.

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.

I am able to assess the statistics

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