Author’s response to reviews

Title: Australian integrative oncology services: a mixed-method study exploring the views of cancer survivors.

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor and BMC CAM reviewers,

Thank you for the opportunity to resubmit the manuscript Australian integrative oncology services: a mixed-method study exploring the views of cancer survivors BCAM-D-17-01286R2

We sincerely appreciate the reviewer comments and attention to detail. Below is our response in point form to each comment.

Your sincerely

Dr Jennifer Hunter

1) Although you note in your reply to the Reviewer’s comment about removing statements suggesting that this is largest study of its kind, this statement is still in the abstract and should also be removed from there as well. Without conducting a full and comprehensive review of the published and unpublished literature to support this statement, it should not be made. Please review the entire manuscript to ensure that there are no other places where this claim is made.
RESPONSE: the statement has been removed from the abstract and the entire manuscript checked.

2) Page 21, lines 542-543: This sentence would benefit from rephrasing as it is difficult to follow. I had to reread it several times to understand what point was being made: “When asked who they thought should pay for all or some of the cost, structural solutions were most common.” Including “participants” in the second part of sentence would improve the grammar and flow, as “structural solutions” is not a “who”, nor is it clear who is giving the response to the question asked.

RESPONSE: the grammar has been corrected.

3) Page 22, line 564: replace “confirm” with suggest. Findings from a relatively small sample of cancer survivors cannot be used to “confirm” any conclusion. They can be used to suggest.

RESPONSE: the opening sentence of the discussion has been amended to stating that the results ‘align’ with other research in Australia. As per point 5, references have been added to support the statement.

4) Page 22, line 577: Edit this statement to be less conclusive: “This mixed-method study is the first in Australia to specifically explore…” How do you know this is the case? Was an extensive review of the published and grey literature conducted to verify? Without any support for this statement it cannot be made as there could very well be another study conducted but not published on this topic. I suggest rephrasing to “one of the first” or similar, but being cautious to not make any claims that cannot be supported with evidence.

RESPONSE: the sentence has been changed to ‘one of the first’.

5) Page 26, lines 669-673: Please provide references to support these assertions; otherwise they sound like conclusions based on the study findings, which, as noted earlier, cannot be made from the findings of one study.

RESPONSE: references have been added to back the first statement in the conclusions. The second sentence has been rewritten. Claims have been downplayed and are followed by a recommendation.

6) Similarly, on the same page, lines 673-676, try to avoid over-generalising the findings to “many cancer survivors”. Present conclusions in line with those that you sampled, cancer survivors in Australia, not ALL cancer survivors.
RESPONSE: the sentence has been changed, ‘many cancer survivors’ was removed and ‘Australia’ was added.