Reviewer’s report

Title: The potential of self-assessment tool to identify healthcare professionals' strengths and areas in need of professional development to aid effective facilitation of group-based, person-centered diabetes education

Version: 0 Date: 26 May 2017

Reviewer: Bunmi Malau-Aduli

Reviewer's report:

The paper aims to highlight the importance of healthcare professionals (HCPs) using a tool to self-assess their professional skills in order to identify strengths and areas in need of professional development so that they can effectively facilitate group-based, person-centered diabetes self-management education programs.

In my opinion, the research is highly relevant and it addresses a very important healthcare issue (diabetes). Also, the methodology used is quite robust. However, some aspects of the manuscripts need major revisions before publication.

Major Revisions

1. The authors need to be clear about the aim of the study and this should be correctly aligned with all the other components (title, background, methods, results, discussion and conclusions) of the manuscript.

   a. The authors stated that the aim of the study "was to explore the potential of a tool to self-assess professional skills in facilitating person-centeredness in group-based diabetes self-management education". How does one facilitate "person-centeredness"? Shouldn't it be 'to facilitate person-centered diabetes self-management education programs"? This sentence needs to be re-phrased to make meaning to the reader. See also Page 5, Lines 100-102.

   b. Title of the paper: The current title is somewhat confusing. The self-assessment tool wasn't used to facilitate person-centered diabetes education, rather it was used to identify HCPs' strengths and areas in need of professional development to aid effective facilitation of group-based, person-centered self-management education programs. I suggest that the authors should change the title to reflect what was done and who the targeted participants were.

   c. All through the manuscript, the authors continually use the phrase "…for facilitating person-centered diabetes education in groups". It is unclear to the reader what the "in groups" refers
to. I would suggest that this phrase be changed to "...for facilitating group-based, person-centered diabetes education".

d. At the start of the Discussion, the authors reported that they 'explored the potential of a self-assessment tool based on The Health Education Juggler to develop healthcare professionals' skills in facilitating person-centeredness in groups". This is not correct! As mentioned earlier, the reported aim of the study needs to be refined to capture exactly what was investigated in the study. Having read through the manuscript, I do not think the authors used the self-assessment tool to develop HCPs' professional skills but rather to validate the findings from the field observations & the interviews; and also to facilitate self-reflection. As reported by the authors in the Conclusions - the self-assessment tool aided the identification of strengths and areas that need improvement and NOT the development of needed skills. The authors need to correctly align the aim and outcomes of the study within the different sections of the manuscript.

2. In the Methods section, the authors made an attempt to describe the participants involved at the different data collection points. They also included Table 1 to explain Data Types. However, it is still somewhat confusing. I would suggest that the authors use a chart instead of a table to enhance the reader's understanding of the different data collection points/sections, participant numbers in each section and the overlaps (Page 6, Lines 131-137).

3. The link between the interviews and the professional development workshops need to be made more explicit (Page 6).

4. On Page 7 Lines 156-168, the authors reported on how the professional development workshops were conducted. However, some details are missing. How did the HCPs self-assess their existing skills? What were the discussion points/questions used to explore this issue? The authors indicated that the HCPs completed questionnaires assessing their readiness to incorporate person-centeredness in group-based diabetes education but they do not tell the reader what the questionnaires entail. Were these Likert scale questions or free-text comments? How were they incorporated into the overall study findings?

5. All the strengths of the study should be discussed together, before the limitations (Page 17 Line 424 to Page 18 Line 438).

Minor Revisions

Abstract
Background

- Page 4 Line 73: "….behavior changes" should be "….behavioral changes"
- Page 5 Line 105: "….self-assessment an self-problem solving" should be "….self-assessment and self-problem solving"

Methods

- Page 5 Lines 116-117: "….for facilitating person-centered diabetes education in groups" should be "….for facilitating group-based person-centered diabetes education"
- Page 6 Lines 122-123: the authors reported that the aim of the field observations was "to explore HCPs' baseline skills at facilitating person-centeredness in groups". What does that mean? Shouldn't it be "to explore HCPs' baseline skills at facilitating group-based, person-centered diabetes self-management education"?
- Page 6 Line 134: When numbers are reported at the start of a sentence, they should be written out in words, therefore 27 should be written as Twenty seven (27)....
- Page 7 Line 149: Add a comma after self-reflection
- Page 7 Lines 154-155: "….they had not received postgraduate training in the classroom" should be "….they had not received formal postgraduate training"

Results

- Page 10 Line 244: "….adept at of modifying" should be "….adept at modifying"
- Page 10 Line 247: "….empatheticva" should be "….empathetic"
Conclusions

* Page 11 Line 261: "...I am no longer is in the" should be "...I am no longer in the"

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

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.
Not relevant to this manuscript

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
Acceptable

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