Reviewer's report

Title: Participatory improvement of a template for informed consent documents in biobank research. Study results and methodological reflections

Version: 0 Date: 31 Jul 2017

Reviewer: wendy lipworth

Reviewer's report:

* This article describes a focus group process for refining a consent form for biobanking. The article is clearly structured and well written and the authors do a good job of describing the process and its outcomes. Although I am not an expert in focus group methodology, the approach used seems sound and potentially replicable.

* I would have liked more information in the introduction about the broad principles that have emerged from other similar interview or focus group-based information-refining processes. The authors make a good case that the process they applied "works" at a practical level, but it is not entirely clear what (if anything) it adds conceptually to related health communication scholarship.

* I think that in its current form, the article would be of interest primarily to those with a specific interest in health communication and/or those involved in the development of standard/template consent forms (e.g. at a government level). If the authors want to broaden the appeal of the article, they could reflect upon whether there might be ways to modify the process so that it is feasible for use by individual researchers who are designing their own participant information sheets and consent forms

* One other minor point is that the authors seem to place a lot of emphasis on what consent can/should achieve. A more qualified introduction would put the method described in a more realistic context. Having said this, there is nothing wrong with getting consent as right as possible, but it would be good to acknowledge the limitations of even the best consent processes.
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.

Unable to assess

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

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

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal