Author’s response to reviews

Title: Lessons learned from implementing a responsive quality assessment of clinical ethics support

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“Lessons learned from implementing a responsive quality assessment of clinical ethics support”

Reply to editorial letter and reviewers

Dear Dr. McMillan

It is great to hear that our manuscript is potentially acceptable for publication in BMC Medical Ethics. We have carried out the essential revisions that were listed. Please find our detailed responses below.

Yours sincerely,

Eva van Baarle
1. In the Ethics approval and consent to participate section, please provide clarification on why verbal consent was obtained, and not written consent. Please also provide clarification on whether obtaining only verbal consent was approved by the ethics committee.

Reply: We have adjusted and clarified this in the text as follows:

“The need for an ethics approval is deemed unnecessary since this community-of-practice project does not fall within the reach of the Medical Research involving Human Subjects Act and the related Dutch regulations (www.ccmo.nl). In accordance with the ethical principles for medical research as stated in the Declaration of Helsinki, for this specific community-practice-project, it was considered adequate for all participating CES practitioners to give their oral informed consent after being informed about the purpose of the study and the way data would be collected, analyzed, and saved. Prior to participating, all CES practitioners and the directors of the participating health care organizations received an information letter about the RQA project. In this letter, we emphasized the voluntary nature of participation, the option to withdraw from the project, the anonymity of the collected data, and the methods by which we will archive and eventually destroy the research data.”

2. Consent for publication refers to consent for the publication of identifying images or other personal or clinical details of participants that compromise anonymity. If your manuscript uses identifying images or other personal/clinical details, please include a statement of consent to publish from the patient, or in the case of minors, the patients’ guardians. If this is not applicable to your manuscript please state “Not Applicable” in this section.

Reply: This is not applicable to our manuscript. We adjusted the text:

“Consent for publication

Not applicable”
3. The specific individual contributions of ALL authors to the manuscript should be specified in the Authors’ Contributions section. Guidance and criteria for authorship can be found here:
http://www.biomedcentral.com/submissions/editorial-policies#authorship

Currently, the specific contributions of LH and BM are missing.

Reply: Thank you for this comment. We have specified the contributions of LH and BM. We adjusted the Data analysis section, as follows: “The research group, including the other co-authors (LH and BM), used peer review to further validate the overview of themes and subthemes.”

We also adjusted the Authors’ contributions section as follows: “EvB, MP, MvH and JvG analyzed and interpreted the data regarding experiences and perspectives of CES practitioners regarding the RQA project. The other co-authors (LH and BM), used peer review to further validate the overview of themes and subthemes. Evb and JvH were major contributors in writing the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.”

4. At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.

Reply: we have uploaded a single, clean version of the manuscript without any track changes, comments, highlights or text in different colours.