Reviewer's report

Title: Process evaluation of the response of nursing homes to the implementation of the dementiaspecific case conference concept WELCOME-IdA: A qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 22 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Kristine Nordlie Williams

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript that details a process evaluation that was used to evaluate the implementation of a case conferencing system to help nursing home staff manage challenging behaviors of persons with dementia. This paper is based on theories that provide a rigorous framework for the intervention itself, implementation strategies, and for the process evaluation of a clustered trial. The findings are interesting and provide direction for future implementation of this and other interventions in long term care settings. Key steps of selecting role keepers, cases, and case conference participants were noted as critical. The fact that each nursing home adapted the intervention to fit their needs is interesting and pointing out some issues such as lack of dissemination of the plan of care developed in the DCSS to other staff as is very important. Of specific interest is the fact that despite elaborate orientation and on-site practice supervision to support implementation, nursing homes adapted the plan to fit their needs. Another strength was the description and appropriate use of qualitative content analysis that included both inductive and deductive approaches. Quotes were helpful to illustrate the key points.

Areas to clarify include the rationale for completing some phone interviews (with individuals) and some focus groups - how may the different formats have affected the findings and how these were integrated. Completing only 7 DSCCs in 1.5 years across 4 nursing homes is a very limited experience in implementing this program. This should be addressed as well as why some interviews were conducted very early in the implementation process (after first supervised DCSS). Future feasibility/scalability is also an issue due to the intensive 2-day training plus on-site supervision and should be addressed. Table 1 includes description of the nursing staff who participated in the interviews and focus groups - it would be informative to know how many staff of different roles participated in the DCCS and what their roles were. It appears that nursing assistants (who are the largest group of direct care staff) were only minimally included. Was there any assessment of leadership style for administration and culture of the nursing homes? Descriptive information about the nursing homes would be helpful. Information is needed about how interview and focus group participants were recruited and if they provided an informed consent and were paid or otherwise compensated for participation. The discussion should also include plans for future research that might include a menu of strategies for nursing homes to select from to implement the program and also how success can be measured in terms of resident behavior management and other relevant outcomes.

Overall this paper adds to knowledge about the challenging area of implementing dementia care interventions in nursing home staff and makes a valuable contribution to the literature.
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

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

Acceptable

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