Reviewer’s report

Title: Informing the design of a national screening and treatment programme for chronic viral hepatitis in primary care: Qualitative study of at-risk immigrant communities and healthcare professionals

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Reviewer: monica robotin

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This is a well-written paper exploring the perspectives of health care providers and those of high-risk migrant communities in the UK about hepatitis B screening, bringing in new data about the screening preferences and barriers for a number of under-studied communities.

I have some minor essential revisions / points of clarification to make:

1. As the authors acknowledge in the “study limitations” section, it is not possible to ascertain to what extent the view of the participants can be generalisable to the entire target populations. For example the observed range of view on the stigma associated with chronic viral hepatitis is a case in point – this may be due to the topic itself, but is likely compounded by the fact that the size of the group and (understandably) finite number of FGDs sessions did not allow topic saturation. This fact may need reiterating in the Discussion.

2. The GP interviews provided interesting perspectives on capacity issues in general practice which are essential for a population-level intervention, although the representativeness of the informant group may be again a relevant issue.

3. Upon reading the paper it is unclear what the proposed intervention comprises. Reference is made on page 29 to a community-based screening and treatment program; does this entail GPs sending high risk patients a letter of invitation to screening (i.e. a “medicalised” screening model), but no reference is made to community engagement and education and/ or GP support. The inclusion (or not) of such information may have a significant bearing on the responses received.

Some small points

1. In the Results section, authors may consider replacing “confluent” data with “convergent” on line 208.

2. Similarly line 591 – the “affirm” may be replaced with “confirm” or “validate” or “corroborate”

3. Tables 1 and 2; the third row 3 refers to “mean (range) age (yrs)” – but as no range is included, is it referring to median age?

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests