Reviewer’s report

Title: Endurance, resistance and resilience in the South African health care system: a comparative case study to demonstrate mechanisms of coping within a transforming system

Version: 2 Date: 25 February 2015

Reviewer: Constanze Pfeiffer

Reviewer’s report:

This is a very interesting manuscript and it was a pleasure reading it. The manuscript is well written.

Minor essential revisions:

Line 182 and 185: References are missing.
Line 202/203: References are missing.
Line 387: “incredible resilience”. Please delete “incredible” as this is judgemental.

Major revision:

Theoretical framework:

Often exact definitions of terms are missing, e.g. definition of agency - there are many different definitions, but on which ones exactly do the authors build their work?

216: What type of resources do you refer to exactly: social, cultural, economic, symbolic ones.? You might want to refer to the following article for definitions(attached to this review):


Methodology:

The methods are well described, however, additional information on who collected the data is missing. Especially in qualitative research reflections about the background and roles of the people (gender, nationality, position in project) that collected and analysed the data is important.

Results:

Although the importance of resources is highlighted in line 216 – the cases, especially from a patient perspective – do not elaborate in detail about the different types of resources that were mobilized and how/why the respondents managed to mobilize them.
Thulanis’ case:
I am not convinced that Thulani’s refusal to be a victim can be interpreted as resilience. Not committing to treatment would have resulted in death. Thus is his way of dealing with his disease really resilience?
In addition, coping and resilience are not exactly the same as suggested implicitly in line 464.

Limitations:
Clearly state the study’s limitations.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance 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