Author's response to reviews

Title: Health Professional Perspectives on Systems Failures in Transitional Care for Patients with Dementia and their Carers: A Qualitative Descriptive Study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
2 December, 2015

The Editor,
BMC Health Services Research

Dear Editor

Thank you for the opportunity to resubmit an original article for publication titled “Health professional perspectives on systems failures in transitional care for patients with dementia and their carers: a qualitative descriptive study.” for consideration for publication in BMC Health Services Research.

We provide the following statements relating to this paper:
This manuscript has not previously been published and no duplicate publication is planned.
This study was approved by the Hunter New England Health Human Research Ethics Committee and University of Newcastle (Australia) Human Research Ethics Committee.

This study describes acute care and primary health care perspectives on the discharge process and transitional care for patients with Dementia and their carers. There were two major themes derived from the analysis of data: Barriers to effective discharge planning from acute care, and process failure and associated outcomes from the community perspective. There are important implications for health professionals involved in discharge planning and transitional care for these vulnerable people (with Dementia) and their carers.

All authors meet the criteria for authorship and I can confirm that all authors have read and approved the final submitted version of this paper and all those entitled to authorship are listed as authors. The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Sincerely,

Ashley Kable
Associate Professor, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Response to editorial comments: MS 1439466971707489

RE: Health Professional Perspectives on Systems Failures in Discharge Planning and Transitional Care for Patients with Dementia and their Carers: A Qualitative Descriptive study.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Editorial Comments</th>
<th>Author response</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Thank you for the submission of your revised manuscript and the effort you have</td>
<td>Thank you</td>
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<td>invested in improving the paper. I have now carefully reviewed the revised</td>
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<td>manuscript and your response to the reviewers’ comments. On the majority of the</td>
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<td>issues and comments made by the reviewers you have responded in an adequate</td>
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<td>manner. Still, there are a few minor issues and two major revisions that need to</td>
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<td>be addressed before a possible publication.”</td>
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**MINOR ISSUES:**

- Please include in your abstract (line 41) “Two main themes with belonging sub-themes derived from the analysis were”:
  - This item has been amended as requested.
- Please rewrite lines 197-200 to better explain what is coming (these were not focus group themes, but analytical themes)
  - This item has been amended as requested.
- Please rewrite lines 532-540 as the phrasing appears awkward. What do you mean by “the data presented are consistent with the major themes identified in this study”? Of course the data are consistent with the major themes since the major themes build on the data???
  - These lines have been revised. The item: “the data presented are consistent with the major themes identified in this study” has been deleted.

**MAJOR ISSUES:**

- Unfortunately I do not feel that you have addressed the reviewer 2 comment made concerning the discussion section (I also see that this comment perhaps should have been placed under major revisions required). As the reviewer rightfully claims, your discussion includes a detailed account of your major findings now grouped under 8 sub-headings. Since the findings are not unique and rather echo what other studies have reported you need to structure and organize the discussion section in a more stringent manner addressing what is truly new in your findings and how they enlighten or broaden findings from other studies. What knowledge has your study contributed to? Reviewer 2 has suggested that you should use a theoretical framework to discuss your findings. I am not sure whether this is possible, but you should try to distill some of the broader analytical issues of your study that can provide new knowledge. Can you group your findings into a framework or model for system failures in transitional care for PWD (I am not sure whether the Framework for Integrating Care for Older People with Complex Health Needs is useful in this respect since you are mainly addressing system failures and not improvement issues)? How are existing system failures in transitional care generalized? I think some sort of analytical generalization is what is missing in the discussion. It currently evolves too much around empirical accounts and is too detailed with the 8 sub-headings.
  - The entire discussion section has been restructured. It contains new information about the lack of suitable frameworks, and existing models and their requirements. It also makes the point that most previous studies and interventions about transitional care have not included PWD or recognised their unique needs due to their increased vulnerability associated with cognitive impairment. The section includes 4 sub-headings with specific discussion of findings from this study that provide new insight about transitional care for PWD in contrast to previous studies that frequently excluded people with cognitive impairment.
- As a consequence of the somewhat “dispersed” discussion section it is also difficult to see a to-the-point direction in the conclusion section. Please reformulate it in a more precise manner focusing on the implications of your study. What have you contributed with, how should your findings inform future practice and research on transitional care of PWD.
  - The conclusion has been amended to focus more specifically on the implications of the study in the manuscript and the abstract.