Reviewer’s report

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

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Reviewer: Rose Mari Mari Olsen

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this interesting manuscript. The paper reports health professionals’ perspectives on the discharge process and transitional care arrangements for people with dementia and their carers. I think that the topic is very timely and of great importance. However, the manuscript, in my opinion, would benefit from some revisions.

Minor Essential Revisions

The title describes the content of the article. The abstract is well organized and readable. However, there seems to be some mismatch between the description of results in the Abstract and in the main document. In the Abstract the authors write, “two main categories derived from the analysis”, while in the Results (second paragraph) in the main document they write “two major themes”. According to the description of the analysis process (last paragraph of the Methods), I assume that “themes” is the correct term.

In the Abstract, it looks like that the text following “Barriers to effective discharge planning and provision of post discharge transitional care” and “Transitional care process failures and associated outcomes for people with dementia” are sub-themes derived from the main themes. However, they do not have the same names as the sub-themes presented in the Results section in the main document.

The background is well described and gives a reasonable justification for the study.

The results are well presented and logical with good use of participant quotes to support the themes and sub-themes. The participants are described both in Methods and in Results. As I find it a little overlapping and confusing, I would like to suggest that the authors, in the Results section, describe the participants and focus groups in a table rather than in text.

More characteristics of the participants would be useful, e.g. sex distribution, mean age, working experience.

Several places in the Results, the authors write “ACAT”, which I assume is an abbreviation of “Aged Care Assessment Team”. Since not all are familiar with the
abbreviation, I think the authors should provide an explanation the first time it is used.

Discussion: Central aspects of the findings are discussed. However, as the findings are not unique, I think that the authors should consider discussing the main findings in light of relevant theory, e.g. integrated care literature.

In my opinion, the last sentences in the last paragraph before “Strengths and limitations” (starting with “The critical issues identified in this study”) should rather be placed under Conclusion.

Major Compulsory Revisions

More description regarding methods is required. In the first paragraph of the Method, it is stated that “clinicians from four professional groups (who agreed to contact colleagues for this purpose)” selected the participants. How may this have affected the selection of participants?

According to the descriptions of participants in the first paragraph of Results, the focus group size varied between 4 and 16 participants. How was the size and number of groups determined? Group dynamics; was it unproblematic to get all the participants involved in the discussions?

More details on how the analysis is conducted is required. In addition, why was this approach the best suited for the aim of the study? Did the participants provide feedback on the findings?

**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