Reviewer’s report

Title: Using technology to engage hospitalised patients in their care: a realist review

Version: 0 Date: 12 Sep 2016

Reviewer: Simone Gibson

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this interesting paper. I really enjoyed reading this manuscript and am pleased that the views of patients are increasingly being considered in service provision. This paper was informative and addresses two extremely important aspects of hospital care - ie patients playing an increased role in their own care, and the use of technology. Your rationale for the realist review approach was clear but methodology needs more explanation to ensure rigour. This review raised some questions for me regarding patients using HIT regarding equity of care. I understand that this issue is beyond the scope of your review however I believe it is an important consideration as these technologies roll out. Therefore it would be relevant to know how the studies reported patients being unable to access HITs.

A few other comments...

Methods - need to be more explicit as to how your methodology relates to the realist review framework - eg a flow chart or table perhaps to illustrate Pawson's Step 1 process? There is a need for clarity around critical appraisal methods as the items in Pawson's Step 3 are not explained in a transparent manner.

Findings section needs some overview to contextualise the results. How many papers were in the final analysis? A general description of types of settings, programs, patients, etc would assist in orientating the reader.

line 198 This is the only bold italicised heading and seems out of place. Consider reworking headings

line 266 Self assessment and feedback are two quite different things, please clarify how they are related or consider reporting separately. If the authors mean the patients are feeding back their self-assessment then perhaps omit the "feedback" part? It would be interesting to see a separate "feedback" section where patients use the HIT to report their evaluations of HCPs/institution but the review may not have identified such papers. It is noted that patient evaluations of HIT programs is threaded throughout the results.

Line 286 Final sentence seems out of place.

An overview of how patients access the HIT would be useful. Were they using their own or hospital devices?
I am not sure if there is a need for both the sub-headings and the propositions - can you use the proposition as a heading instead? Alternately lines 486-488 might sit better at the beginning of the results section to prepare readers for your style of reporting

Limitations of studies are reported in a general manner but need to report the limitations of the review.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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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