Reviewer’s report

Title: Like a hotel, but boring: Users' experience with short-time community-based residential aftercare

Version: 0 Date: 13 Aug 2017

Reviewer: David Crompton

Reviewer’s report:

An interesting paper seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of a post hospitalisation program.

My comments will initially focus on specific issues:

1) The paper identified ‘The CRA is staffed with psychiatric nurses, general nurses, and an educationalist 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and a general practitioner is present in the CRA one day a week. The staff is specialized in recovery-oriented strategies, such as self-management and self-responsibility to manage daily activities', however I do not have a clear sense of what is the role (beyond the checklist) of these staff in terms of therapy either for the individual or families/carers. The paper identifies that literature highlights the impact of substance abuse and given that many of those with SMI have substance abuse issues I would have considered that addressing this issue would have been part of the program.

2) The paper identifies that patients did not receive information about CRA prior to admission i.e. prior to discharge from inpatient unit, yet the authors did not perceive that the pre admission process to the CRA should be improved.

3) It is unclear why four weeks was chosen as the time frame for admission.

4) The paper refers to 13 patients interviewed but later 'hints' there may have been some who declined (but there might have been patients at the CRA who did not want to be included in the study but could have had other experiences.), the number who declined to be interviewed should be identified.

General comments:

The paper seems to this reviewer to provide a report of the outcomes of the interviews rather than link the Qualitative Research to a framework that addresses the role of the CRA in recovery, reducing readmissions etc.

The authors indicate they perceive this is the first paper to evaluate a CRA; there however other papers that evaluate similar models or models that seek to address issues outlined in this paper e.g. Thomas, K. A., Rickwood, D. J., & Brown, P. M. (2017). Symptoms, functioning and
quality of life after treatment in a residential sub-acute mental health service in australia. Health & Social Care in the Community, 25(1), 243-254. doi:10.1111/hsc.12301,


In summary the findings of the interviews would be strengthened (in this reviewer's opinion) if the authors considered linking the evaluation to a framework that can guide the development of the CRA program and improve outcomes/program gaps through the evaluations they are undertaking.

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

Yes

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?
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Not relevant to this manuscript
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Acceptable

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