Reviewer's report

Title: Understanding how, why, for whom, and under what circumstances opt-out blood-borne virus testing programmes work to increase test engagement and uptake within prison: a rapid-realist review

Version: 0 Date: 06 Jul 2018

Reviewer: Noel Craine

Reviewer's report:

Note to Editor: Please note I do not have the expertise required to properly review the methodology of this paper; comments thus relate to other sections.

This paper addresses a matter of public health importance.

The authors explore issues around a major challenge namely the diagnosis of BBV amongst prison inmates. Prison populations are at a greatly elevated risk of BBV infection and delivering high standard health care to them remains challenging.

The systematic approach to this question and subsequent analysis provides a practical model for understanding and responding to the challenge of improving BBV diagnosis in the era of highly effective anti-viral treatments.

The theories presented are informative and frame the issue in a manner that allows future critique. The conclusions of the paper are justified by the findings.

I would suggest the paper would benefit from some limited further information.

Some further information on the legal commitment to provide health services to incarcerated individuals both within the UK and other settings in which studies included were carried out; this has implications to wider commitments to act upon a positive test result and ensure treatment is provided (this also includes a willingness to refer to outside agencies upon release).

Page 13: In the section on theory one it would be interesting to know if any studies addressed issues/concerns of confidentiality with sharing of information to health care services (in particular GPs) based in the community

Page 18: line 372 some discussion of the implications of imposing an intervention that would not be currently mandated in a community setting would be useful

Line 384: dried blood spot testing mentioned here but not in the results. Some discussion of the role of dried blood spot testing (as opposed to venepuncture or oral testing would be helpful in the introduction given its role, certainly in the UK context, of diagnoses within prison
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

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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