Author’s response to reviews

Title: Re-orienting health systems through a commissioning approach: finding solutions for improved consumer engagement

Authors:

Karen Gardner (karen.gardner@unsw.edu.au)
Helen Dickinson (h.dickinson@adfa.edu.au)
Katie Moon (katie.moon@unsw.edu.au)

Version: 1 Date: 28 May 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear editor,

Thank you to the reviewer for her useful comments. We set out our response to each of the comments below.

Reviewer #1:

1) In the introduction of their paper, the authors may wish to give examples of health systems that have relied on commissioning to guarantee the delivery of health care and services. This will help understanding the importance of the paper for a readership in health policy and management.

In the background section of the manuscript we have included a list of countries that have adopted a commissioning approach. We also note that there is no single model nor evidence that any single model achieves better than others.

2) The main focus of the paper is around consumer engagement within the context of commissioning. I suggest that the authors provide a clearer and more precise definition of what they mean by consumer. I suppose that in a commissioning process you can get a variety of consumer individual patients, associations of patients, organizations. The authors may also wish to expand on the role and objectives of consumer engagement. They suggested that consumer engagement can be transformative - it would be useful to
elaborate about the expected impact of consumer engagement on the commissioning process itself and on various types of outcomes or impact for patients and organizations.

Our definition of consumer is now included in the Introduction.

3) The authors recommend based on their review a set of strategies to respond to various challenges related to consumer engagement within commissioning. It would be useful, if available, to illustrate with one concrete example the strategies that are proposed to enable consumer engagement. In its current form the manuscript stays at a very general level and it is difficult to understand the type of actions that can be taken concretely to accommodate challenges associated with consumer engagement.

We note there are no concrete examples in the literature from which commissioners can draw lessons. In an attempt to provide greater guidance to those working in this space we have generated the principles that are set out in the paper to start to address this gap.

4) The authors did not bring the issue of capacities explicitly in their paper. Commissioning requires capacity to access and use data to support continuous improvement. The authors may wish in the conclusion of the paper to briefly state which type of capacity a commissioning body needs to support consumer engagement.

The conclusion now addresses capacity building needed to support consumer engagement.