Reviewer’s report

Title: An Exploration of Group-based HIV/AIDS Treatment and Care Models in Sub-Saharan Africa Using a Realist Evaluation (Intervention-Context-Actor-Mechanism-Outcome) Heuristic Tool: A Systematic Review

Version: 0 Date: 21 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Karl Blanchet

Reviewer’s report:

Dear authors,

thank you very much for your paper. I really like the methodology and the rigour you bring to this field.

I have a few comments, which I hope will help strengthen the paper.

Major comments:

1. "Care umbrella" is a nice image. I would suggest you define the concept to make sure there is no misunderstanding.

2. Page 5: on line 115: please define "they".

3. Page 7: there is a focus on group-based care. Why are individual-based models not included in your search? unless I misunderstood, which may require that you clarify this aspect.

4. Page 7: please expand the comparison between conventional models, individual-based models and group-based models. At the end of the paragraph, I am not entirely sure I understood the differences.

5. Page 8: Please explain the level of evidence on individual-based models.

6. The Results section is not clearly highlighted. Please add a headline.

7. The results for steps 3 and 4 are not explicit. Please make sure that for each step, you have a short conclusion summarising the key results.

8. Page 18: You mentioned that a few mechanisms were identified. Please list them.

Minor comments:
1. On page 4, please add "(SSA)" after Sub-Saharan Africa.

2. Page 5: replace "medicaton" by "medication"

3. Page 19: delete "are" before "guided".

4. Page 19: replace "relating" by "related".

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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