Author’s response to reviews

Title: Implementation and Dissemination of a Transition of Care Program for Rural Veterans: A Controlled Before and After Study

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Author’s response to reviews:

August 22, 2017
Anne Sales and Michel Wensing
Editors, Implementation Science
Dear Editors,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide more detail on our study design. We are re-submitting our manuscript entitled, “Implementation and Dissemination of a Transitions of Care Program for Rural Veterans” with the following modifications.

In response to your comment that our manuscript was not sufficiently well reported to judge the type of design used, we have added details under Study Design (pg. 7, lines 141-146) and Evaluation (pg. 14, lines 300-309). We have also updated Figure 2, which summarizes our study design.

We are using a Type II Hybrid study design which assess both intervention and implementation outcomes. Our funding agency does not allow us to use a randomized design, so we are using the most rigorous non-randomized design that is appropriate for our study. We will employ a difference-in differences analysis using similar VA facilities as a control group. Control sites will be propensity matched with intervention sites based on factors that lead to readmission at both the facility and patient level.

Our study satisfies the criteria for Cochrane EPOC review inclusion as a controlled before and after study, and is eligible for systematic review for the following reasons. 1) This study will include data collection on a pre- and post-intervention period at both control and intervention sites using VA Fee Basis data to determine 30 day readmission rates. 2) Control sites will be chosen based on propensity matching and compared using a difference in difference analysis. A propensity matched cohort of patients from control sites will also be compared with enrolled patients at intervention sites. 3) Our study will contain at least 10 intervention and 10 control sites.

Thank you for your consideration of this manuscript. Please feel free to contact me should any questions arise during your review.

Sincerely,

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