Reviewer's report

Title: BRACAVENIR: an observational study of expectations and coping in young women with high hereditary risk of breast and ovarian cancer

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Reviewer: Cecilie Heramb

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As such the topic is very interesting, because management and acceptance of increased cancer risk is highly important for individuales carrying BRCA mutations.

However, I find the presentation confusing. Is this study a qualitative evaluation of a patient-centered intervention, or quantitative study of life-quality? The authors state that this is "a prospective, psychoeducational cohort study" but it is unclear if they themselves consider this qualitative or quantitative research, but I assume they consider it qualitative/semi-qualitative.

They also state intervention goals, p.3, line 23 "Our primary objective was to change the expectations of" these young women". I find it hard to understand what the intervention is, except for arranging the meeting, which is described and analysed thoroughly as a broad educational course, with a somewhat unproportional focus on nipple-sparing surgery. Why do you want to "change expectations" rather than just explore and describe them?

In general after reading the mns I think it suffers from some "overinterpretation" of results, and unsystematic presentation of methods. The other main obstacle for reading is the use of quite a few unconventional British words, such as procreation, verbatim, durably, evolution, accrual, ameliorate, adherence, inducement mails, second ordeal, "punctuated their childhood", envisaged ++ In my opinion, the mns will need a British language consultant to become more readable.

In more detail: I believe the result subsection called 3.3 Reporting of participants verbatim should be a part of method section, as this is a section describing how the interviews were transcribed as well as going through the content of focus interviews? At least in part this should be covered in Methods section.

In results section it is confusing that p-values higher than significance level is stated many times, but not the exact change in parameters/scores. I.e line 15 in section 3.2 analysis of questionnaires. "Scores for Herth's hope index increased over 12-month follow-up period", could be supplemented with numbers describing the absolute change in stead of merely p=0.07.
The issue of doing statistics on 5 participants questionnaire could also be discussed more thoroughly, because these are very low numbers.

In discussion section, it is stated in line 27 that many of the participants worked in the Medical domain, this could be moved to 3.1: Patient characteristics.

Line 36-38 : all the participants reported receiving their molecular diagnosis as BRCA mutation carriers as traumatic, even brutally so" This is a very important finding, and I dont believe this is covered in results? It is also stated that the main motivation for taking part in the week-end was information seeking. This is hardly surprising, and should probably be part of background information. Many clinics do offer patient courses and these have high impact on well-being and anxiety symptoms as shown in a previous article published in the same journal: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5225510/

Maybe the significant finding that global increase of hopefulness following the course should be highlighted more in results, maybe even presented first together with the finding that "locus of control" is significantly high regardless of intervention. What does this finding say about the patients taking part in the study ?

In general, I believe the mns will benefit from a clearer structure, a more clearly defined "aim/main problem"/knowledge gap," as well as clearer answer to the stated main question the authots decide upon.

There are many interesting topics discussed in the mns, but as a reader the main line is hard to follow. Maybe, if the study is called exploratory/descriptive rather than a intervention study, it may be easier to follow the many-faceted results and discussion.

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