Reviewer's report

Title: Improving the relevance of randomised trials to primary care: a qualitative study investigating views towards pragmatic trials and the PRECIS-2 tool.

Version: 0 Date: 07 Aug 2019

Reviewer: Anders Blædel Hansen

Reviewer's report:

I want to praise the authors for this fine piece of work. I have only minor comments and some suggestions.

Background: The first reference could be supplemented by this reference (Kennedy-Martin T, Curtis S, Faries D, et al. A literature review on the representativeness of randomized controlled trial samples and implications for the external validity of trial results. Trials 2015;16:495), that empirically supports your claim.

Methods: the last part of the first sentence needs to be clarified or rewritten "…and on PRECIS-2" Do you mean? "on how best to design trials based on PRECIS-2?"

Line 52-52: word is missing? "…carried out [at] the participants…"

Results: your results are interesting and a valuable contribution to the understanding of pragmatic trials. Especially the lack of knowledge of pragmatic trials among some interviewees are concerning… (p. 7).

Discussion: in the discussion I think you need to emphasis the importance of good reporting (p. 11, line 57-58), by adding a reference. You are right about the importance of reporting details of the intervention, but this aspect is often overlooked cf. this publication PMID: 29467013 "Details to replicate interventions remain lacking, impairing best implementation or meaningful further research. Editorial endorsement of reporting checklists needs to be more extensive") For this purpose, a very useful checklist (and tool) exist: Hoffmann TC, Glasziou PP, Boutron I, et al. Better reporting of interventions: template for intervention description and replication (TIDieR) checklist and guide. BMJ 2014;348:g1687-g1687. doi:10.1136/bmj.g1687. I would strongly recommend you include a reference for this.

Comparison with existing literature: This is a fine section. And it is fine that you also are critical towards some aspects of pragmatic trials. A critique that has been raised (Kent DM, Kitsios G. Against pragmatism: On efficacy, effectiveness and the real world. Trials 2009;10:1-3) is that "…a null pragmatic trial provides little information about whether our treatment has some potential value". Kent & Kitsios raises some questions about pragmatic trials that are often overlooked. This comment is just for your inspiration and reflection (and not necessarily for inclusion in the paper).
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