Reviewer’s report

Title: DIAMOND (DImigital Alcohol Management ON Demand): a mixed methods feasibility RCT and embedded process evaluation of a digital health intervention to reduce hazardous and harmful alcohol use

Version: 0 Date: 14 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Mark Deady

Reviewer's report:

The current manuscript presents the findings of a feasibility trial and process evaluation of an online treatment for alcohol use reduction. I credit the authors with their efforts in this important area. I think the paper holds some merit by way of informing the authors subsequent rethink of an RCT. However, on this basis alone I do not feel the manuscript has adequate merit or contributes to the furthering of knowledge in this area in any real way.

Unfortunately for the authors study recruitment and attrition, and seemingly a number of project delays lead to a failure to have adequate data to analyse and consequently this reviewer does not feel there is much to gleaned from manuscript for a wider audience.

The authors primary conclusion was that it was not feasible to conduct such a trial on a larger scale. As such the primary outcome results are absent but even much of the process evaluation has methodological flaws eg sample size and the nature of the sample themselves, furthermore, this "thematic" analysis does not truly cover themes at all, but rather a short list of difficulties faced. And with such numbers it is difficult to believe that strong themes could truly emerge.

Finally, there are a number of structural issues with the paper, although minor, add to its overall frailty. This includes the listing of outcomes without adequate structure (eg what are primary?, what are the measures used to assess these outcomes?), how are the exclusion criteria confirmed (eg severe illness?). Additionally, I feel the methodology could benefit from a more clear flow diagram indicating where the process evaluation recruited and dropped off from (eg page15).

There are also present a number of grammatical errors, largely around the placement of references (egline 132,343,366) and some areas might benefit from more academic style writing (eg paragraph at line 169)

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