Reviewer’s report

Title: Implementation of Mifepristone Medical Abortion in Canada: Pilot and Feasibility Testing of a Survey to Assess Facilitators and Barriers

Version: 0 Date: 29 Jul 2019

Reviewer: Andrew Kenneth Husband

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for the opportunity to read this interesting piece of work. I would ask you to consider the following:

Although this is not a randomised feasibility/pilot trial I would ask the authors to consider the extension to the CONSORT guidelines for randomised polite and feasibility studies. Have the authors used this framework as a guide to reporting of this study? In particular, I am not clear how the aims of this study (which are not well defined in the manuscript) align to a feasibility and/or pilot study? What was being tested for feasibility, what aspect of a larger trial was being piloted? I can see that the work is about the development of a tool using a theoretical background to inform that, I don't see how it fits the definition of a feasibility and/or pilot study. I can see that the final paragraph discusses the piloting of the survey instrument, I would argue this needs to be clearer with stated aims as per the CONSORT statement.

As per above the definition of specific objectives for the pilot trial need to be clear, is this a pilot trial or are you piloting a questionnaire to examine content and face validity? I would argue these things are different.

Background

Pg 4 line 16, should read support?
Pg 4 para 3 you use the term medication and drug interchangeably here, technically the discussion is about a medication, a combination formulation available within a drug delivery system. The term drug is not appropriate in this instance unless you are discussing a specific and individual chemical entity. There are other examples of this throughout.

Methods

I do understand the approach you have taken to a modified Delphi process. I would argue that it is subject to bias and string views overruling other, especially given that the focus groups in question here were unusually small, 3-6 participants. How was this managed?
Pg 11 para 1 line 14 'This included a thorough.....' This sentence doesn't make sense to me, please review.

Results
Again, I am slightly confused here as to what the focus of this paper is. To this point, I would have said it was about the development on an instrument and the assurance of face validity etc. The qualitative section in the results appears to be more about the actual views of practitioners to abortion services rather than a discussion of the instrument itself. I appreciate the qual work has been done well, but this is confused in terms of the aims and objectives of this paper. How do these views align with the instrument design process? I would argue this goes back to my first point above about the aims and objectives of a feasibility and/or pilot study. The statement at the beginning of page 21 does illustrate my point 'Our study process resulted in a more comprehensive survey than any we were able to identify in the international literature to understand barriers to contraceptive and abortion service provision in high-income countries' a survey of what? Views on this issue or on the tool you are developing?

Conclusion

Where in the study have you tested the tool to be able to make the statement 'We envision that both the approach to developing this survey and the final instrument will be readily adaptable for other jurisdictions'

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:

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None

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