Reviewer’s report

Title: A study protocol to assess the feasibility of conducting an evaluation trial of the ADVANCE integrated intervention to address both substance use and intimate partner abuse perpetration to men in substance use treatment

Version: 0 Date: 01 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Sandra Jumbe

Reviewer's report:

A well written protocol for an important research. I only have a few comments (mostly grammatical/typing errors);

p3 lines 41-43 I would revise that sentence for more clarity/flow i.e. 3/4 men attending SU treatment in ... had committed IPA ...' I would also expand on what you mean by 'few had ever had support' - support for what?

On page 4 under Rationale, you talk about increasing reach ... do you mean interventions' reach? This is not clear

In your inclusion / exclusion criteria, you mention several times that the keyworker will assess men's suitability to participate in the trial e.g. p6 line 14. I am not sure what this means. Will the keyworker self select suitable participants even after the eligibility criteria is ok? Why? Any risk of recruitment bias here?

Also reading through your informed consent process on pg 7 I think you need to make it clear somewhere earlier on that you are taking on a staged informed consent approach. Reads to me to be quite similar to the Trials Within Cohorts (TwiCs) approach to sharing research information.

Pg 7 lines 17-19 I would rewrite this sentence or split into two sentences as it is not very clear

Lines 26-27 I think you mean to say 'countersigned' by the researcher

Lines 46 again here we need more clarity on how keyworkers will assess suitability for participation

Pg 8 line 36-37, what is the nature of the interviews with the women, i.e. content? I assume these may be quite vulnerable participants.

Pg 9 line 31 around Blinding, do you mean statisticians will be blind to participants' trial condition during recruitment or throughout the feasibility trial?
pg 11 line 7, when and how will you get consent from the group to record their session? will this be audio or video recordings? what if someone in the group does not want the session to be recorded?

pg 12 under Fidelity, why have you opted for video recording? Secondly, do you have any detail on how the checklist assesses fidelity?

One more general comment - I do feel that you have to many measures/questionnaires for the participants to complete which may be quite burdensome. I know this is probably part of your feasibility assessment but I do wonder how necessary some of them are e.g. mental health

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