Reviewer’s report

Title: The impact of involvement on researchers: a learning experience.

Version: 0 Date: 10 May 2017

Reviewer: Ann Single

Reviewer's report:

The approach of considering the impact of involvement on researchers is useful. The article would benefit from the following:

- including a clear research question (I note that you state that it is a discussion of a specific part of an evaluation, but there must have been a research question that guided your method)

- a more appropriate source for your definition of 'learning'. I consider Wikipedia to be a guide, not a source. The Oxford English Dictionary, for example, would be more credible while remaining consistent with your understanding of learning. However, even with that source, a dictionary definition can serve as a helpful warning to readers and authors that an element of our work could be better informed.

- including information about how coding was informed and checked during thematic analysis

- information about the number of interviewers

- clarity about participant numbers. For this particular research question, were just 8 interviews relevant? I have no problem with the number but in the abstract the inclusion of '16' suggests that it was a larger group, but then on reading the paper I wondered if the 8 patient/carer interviews were not the subject of this research question.

- In 35 suggests that on the basis of information being 'new' to researchers, they will learn. Regrettably, I feel it is unlikely that humans learn every time they are exposed to new information and therefore these sentences should be re-written.

- A key limitation to this work is that learning is really under conceptualised and hangs on a Wikipedia definition and yet it is central to your discussion. I feel this really needs to be reflected on as 'learning' is a huge field of research and future work would need to consider how we better define learning in this environment, eg it may need to draw on the considerable volume of work about shared learning and decision-making, and how we measure learning (as in this paper it is self-reported learning and we cannot be sure of intrinsic or extrinsic pressures to be positive about the experience).

- I noted that while reporting the impact of patient involvement on researchers is not something I have seen in peer reviewed journals (and therefore a welcome contribution), the
themes identified are consistent with those identified by researchers interviewed by healthtalk.org http://www.healthtalk.org/people-experiences/medical-research/researchers-experiences-patient-public-involvement/researchers-examples-value-and-impact-involvement.

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