Reviewer’s report

Title: Co-creation of a digital tool for the empowerment of parents of children with physical disabilities

Version: 0 Date: 23 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Clara Joergensen

Reviewer's report:

This paper describes the development of the WWW roadmap and sets the scene for a study exploring its effectiveness for parents with disabled children. It is an interesting initiative, developed in partnership with various stakeholders, and the forthcoming study may provide insights into a new way of accessing information through the Internet. However, in its current form, I don't believe that the paper is ready for publication, as it does not present any findings, and describes the development of the tool in a slightly fragmented way. The paper seems to have two objectives - to describe the development of the tool and to describe the methods for the forthcoming project. My recommendation would be to rewrite it with a more clear structure and a single clearly framed objective, either 1) focusing on the development of the tool only and describing this in further detail including more information about the process of co-creation or 2) waiting until the study has been carried out so that analysis and findings can be included.

The following more specific comments may be of help in the further development of the paper:

Several ideas and definitions in the paper need further exploration and clarification. For example, the concept of empowerment is a complex concept, which is not sufficiently described in the paper. A quote from Fumagalli et al is used, but the theoretical background for the concept is omitted and the many variants and applications of the concept are not acknowledged. In addition, it would be useful to see some reflections on the concept of family empowerment and how it may relate to individual empowerment.

The involvement of parents in the project and the process of co-creation of the WWW roadmap could be better described. For example, on page 10, it is mentioned that one parent was recruited to be part of the study team, and that decisions concerning the study and the design could easily be discussed with her and her (online) network. It is argued that "In this way, recruitment, information folders and feasibility of the questionnaires were all verified by the parents involved in the project". However, the process for involving these parents is not described (was it formally, for example through meetings or more informally, for example through social media). When was the one parent involved and when were groups of parents involved? Later it is mentioned that there were 5 parents in the panel, and later again that the first prototype of the roadmap was presented to six parents, that were involved in earlier phases of the project, and six others that showed interest in the project. Who were these other parents? were they a diverse
group and how were they recruited? and what was the extent of their involvement? These are all key questions which need to be answered, so that the reader can follow the process of recruitment and involvement of parents in the project.

Also, on p. 9, l. 3-4, it is argued that "Because our project group consisted of parents, healthcare professionals, researchers and IT4 specialists, decisions were made in real partnership". However, the fact that the group consisted of different stakeholders does not in itself guarantee that decisions were made in partnership and more discussion of the mechanisms by which these decisions were made is necessary to warrant this point.

It would be good if the setting of the study was introduced earlier and more explicitly described.

The language is generally clear and easy to understand, but some phrases or sentences could be improved. The headings could also be used more effectively guide the reader in what is to come.

p. 12, L 11-12: It would be good with a more complete justification as to why a grounded theory approach been chosen for analysis? How will this particular approach benefit your project?

p. 12, L 22: It is mentioned that the domain 'parental involvement in the community' was removed from the Dutch version of the empowerment scale, because it was "considered too culturally sensitive and not applicable for the Dutch situation". I am not sure I understand this. Why would this particular domain be too culturally sensitive? And why is it not important in the Dutch context? There may be a good explanation for this, but it is not obvious without describing the reasons more fully.

p. 16, L4-5: It is argued that "if effective, the WWW-roadmap can function as a tool to help parents formulate their questions, search for information and thus for preparation the consultation with a healthcare professional and function as a facilitator for empowerment and shared-decision making". However, as the study excludes parents whose command of the Dutch language is not sufficient or who don't have access to internet, it would be good to include some reflections on whether this tool may also have some limitations, as it may not facilitate empowerment for all parent groups. It would be useful to know whether the researchers have thought of these potential limitations and perhaps of ways in which alternatives could be developed for these types of groups.
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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal