Reviewer’s report

Title: Using Qualitative Health Research Methods to Improve Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement in Research

Version: 0  Date: 11 Jul 2018

Reviewer: Colleen Ewart

Reviewer’s report:

Clear explanation regarding the limitations currently employed in research methodologies. Extending qualitative research options will clearly extract a far richer pool of data to draw upon. The variety of possible methods which can be utilised were clearly outlined. Each heading explained the method and the way information can then be gathered and analysed. Current PPI is often limited with a tendency to use familiar methods with often the same comfortable group of contributors. By starting from scratch and involving PPI from conception of a research question right through to dissemination proposals gives a clear indication of equality and respect. By involving the PPI voice at the start this can then determine the best qualitative approaches to ensure we bridge any gap between what academia needs and the public in order to fully participate. This approach also ensures the task is broken down into manageable chunks and therefore ensures the process is more accessible for patients/public.

Ethical considerations have been given sufficient weight in terms of the desire to reach out to the seldom heard/hard to reach groups. My only concern would be surrounding engagement strategies and the potential for emotional distress. This needs to be acknowledged and sufficient safeguards built in depending upon the topic.

I felt the Plain English Summary could be amended to be more dynamic and a little less academic in language. This is a very interesting paper and the issues raised are really important. The summary is a little bland and that's a shame because it's your 'showcase' or 'pitch' in just a few short sentences. I started off feeling a little disinterested until I got into the main body of the text; pages 4-7 were really energetic, engaging and exciting to read! Words like 'tokenism' might not be understood by PPI contributors and the final paragraph is 'full on' research speak. The Plain English Summary should be real simple language and very to the point.

I have enjoyed the experience of reading through your paper and have added to my bank of knowledge as a public contributor

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
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