Author’s response to reviews

Title: "Still learning and evolving in our approaches": Patient and stakeholder engagement among Canadian community-based primary health care researchers

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Author’s response to reviews:

“Still learning and evolving in our approaches”: Patient and stakeholder engagement among Canadian community-based primary health care researchers (RIAE-D-18-00061R1)

Response to Editors – November 5, 2018

Comments
Reviewer reports (from the Associate Editors and Joint Editors-in-Chief):

We would like to thank the authors for making some of the suggested changes, particularly around clarifying methods and acknowledging limitations.

- Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to further revise and improve our manuscript.

However the authors have not yet made the paper more concise. The discussion is particularly long. A revised word count does not appear to be included.

- Thank you for this comment. We have revised the paper again, and have made it as concise as possible whilst still preserving the essential content. The revised word count is 9,866.

As suggested by reviewer 3, it is good practice to include unique identifiers on quotes, to allow the reader to judge whether quotes are coming from a range of contributors. This is in line with checklists for reporting qualitative research. This may result in reporting fewer quotes, which would help in addressing reviewers’ and editors’ concerns about the length of the paper.

- Thank you for this comment. We have included unique identifiers for each quote.

It would indeed be helpful to define terms ‘stakeholder’ and ‘patient’. CIHR definitions may not be familiar to an international audience, many of whom do not use the term ‘patient’ as broadly as in this paper. Even acknowledging this definition, inconsistencies remain, as the term ‘patient engagement’ is used very broadly, yet at other times caregivers are listed as separate stakeholders (line 117 and figures).

- Thank you for this comment. We have included a box (Table 1) in which we explain how CIHR and PCORI use the term “patient”, and how we use it throughout the paper. We have also included CIHR’s definition “stakeholder”, and have further clarified that the survey instrument we used asks about patients, family/caregivers and advocacy organizations as three separate
categories of stakeholders. We have also reviewed the paper for consistency in the use of these terms, and have made changes where necessary.

We wonder if perhaps one of the authorial team who has been less involved in the detailed writing might be able to take on a sense- and consistency-checking role for the next iteration?

- Thank you for this suggestion. Several members of the authorial team have reviewed the latest version of the manuscript, both to check sense and consistency, and to assist in making the paper more concise. We also sought outside editorial advice as to how to reduce the word count.