Reviewer’s report

Title: Patient Involvement in Clinical Trials: Motivation and Expectations Differ between Patients and Researchers Involved in a Trial on Urinary Tract Infections

Version: 0 Date: 16 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Kristina Staley

Reviewer’s report:

This is a very interesting paper comparing researcher and patient motivations for involvement. I am not sure I agree that little is known about this topic. I was familiar with many of the issues raised but wondered if this is because of the conversations I have with researchers and patients/the public. Are the authors certain that there aren't any other published articles on this? How have they confirmed this?

Overall I thought the paper clear and well-written. There were a couple of places where the English wasn't quite the same as a native speaker e.g. it's the conduct of research, not the conduction of research. I would have added more comments on other examples, but was unable to do that on the pdf version I had available. I suggest the paper is read again by someone whose first language is English to make any other minor corrections. A note to the editors- is it possible to access Word versions of the documents so as to be able to track changes of this kind?

I also found the results and discussion sections a bit long and I got a bit lost in the detail. I wondered if there was overlap between them or if they could be tightened somewhat. I suggest a minor edit to try to do this.

There were a few comments/ conclusions that I was unsure about. Firstly where the authors referred to researchers not interacting with the panel, and someone not involved in the trial being the communication link between the researchers and the panel. This is mentioned on page 23 and page 27. In my opinion, if there isn't direct contact between researchers and patients/ the public then the opportunities for mutual learning are severely restricted. This practice is more akin to conducting qualitative research rather than involvement. Personally I wouldn't comment on this as if this was Ok practice and I would want to highlight the limitations of doing this. If the authors wanted to explore this, I suggest referring to the following articles:


Finally on page 24, the authors report that researchers stated there was no need for involvement in the recruitment and data collection phases unless there was a problem. I'm not sure I'd agree - i think there is a need for ongoing discussions throughout all stages, as researchers cannot anticipate the problems they might face, nor be aware of their unknown unknowns ahead of time.
and should therefore keep checking in with patients. Researchers should be asking themselves the following questions at all stages 'have we missed anything? have we made any assumptions? are we on the right lines?'. The outcomes of involvement are not always predictable and therefore I'd conclude there shouldn't be any gaps in PPI, as researchers assumptions about when they need patient input might not be correct- again this issue is picked up in the above article if the authors wished to explore this.

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:

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 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.