Reviewer’s report

Title: Participatory action research to pilot a model of mental health service user involvement in an Ethiopian rural primary healthcare setting: Study protocol

Version: 0 Date: 04 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Rhianna Broadway

Reviewer's report:

I think this article is of extreme interest to the field and especially in terms of service user involvement in developing countries.

My two major issues were firstly your lay summary - which when I ran through a readability checker had a reading level of university student which isn't lay at all (when we would consider a lay reading age to be 11 or 12 years). I ran it through the readability checker on the Writer website. I would like to see all lay summary's/paragraphs edited so they are readable for a wide range of people.

Secondly one thing that was coming up for me that I didn't see detailed was the impact of culture/religion on what you are proposing to do. Would it be that women are less likely than men to be involved, are there norms in Ethiopia that may make it harder for service users of certain demographics to be involved and if so how will this be addressed - for me service user involvement only becomes meaningful if in itself if represents everyone (as much as possible) and not just those that are 'privileged in society.

Just some thoughts, otherwise it felt very concise and well thought out and I wish you luck with it.

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 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

Were you mentored through this peer review?

No