Reviewer’s report

Title: Value and learning from carer involvement in a cluster randomised controlled trial and process evaluation - Organising Support for Carers of Stroke Survivors (OSCARSS)

Version: 0 Date: 19 Feb 2020

Reviewer: Andrew Robert Entwistle

Reviewer's report:

I liked this submission because 1) it makes clear that it is about method for what makes PCPI work - valuable info for others in the field including me 2) it uses the phrase 'added value': this is really important because, in my experience, if PCPI does not improve a research project, why have it? Put another way, my experience is that public contributors would be better spent opting out of projects that fall below the standards described in this submission 3) it includes the word 'Carer' in the acronym PCPI; It is my experience reference to Carers is lamentable - lip service if you like, despite my trying to change this - and this is at high level in health and social care research: I am not in favour of new acronyms but here it is welcome and justified. 4) the term 'added value' does beg the question of what this means: it is tempting to want to express this in numerical terms - e.g. Lykert scale but, rather reluctantly, I don't think we are at that stage; also added value may not be apparent until some time in the future (e.g. choosing the best school for a child). Here added value is described as text and I think this is honest and best; we are still at an early stage of public in health research, this is likely to develop with experience but for the moment the textual description is justifiable and appropriate 5) the very positive interaction between academics and public is welcome and to be applauded - my experience is that this can be rare even by highly respected senior academics: this submission will be a great value to such people; I do hope that it will help set the standard for younger health research academics. 6) the submission is not about outcome measures for the project: the move by Universities to judge academic value by measurable outcome measures is, in my opinion, flawed and can count against the career trajectory of researchers who are doing valuable work. Universities should not judge research solely on financial terms? Summarising, I thank the authors for a valuable and enjoyable read.

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Quality of written English
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Acceptable
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