Reviewer’s report

Title: Patient-Oriented Research Competencies in Health (PORCH) for Researchers, Patients, Healthcare Providers, and Decision-makers: Results of a scoping review

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Reviewer: Vanessa Pinfold

Reviewer's report:

PORCH - REVIEW

What a brilliant topic for a paper - so very useful. Understanding competencies across the team. So pleased to be reviewing this - thank you for writing it. Such a lot of work has gone into this manuscript even identifying the literature.

I ahve a few observations - minor - which I hope might be useful.

Abstract - wondered about this statement

Few competencies were documented for the other stakeholder groups. You do fine some - I wondered about listing at least one. As they are an important group and the literature is not focusing on them as much but still imp to show what you found. 4 competencies, I think.

Introduction (line 27) - maybe also mention co-production in the list of approaches. That is the term used in UK.

Might mention this paper which talks about the diversity of activities that service users undertake under the umbrella term PPI. And suggest they need different skills to do so - if not what competencies.

Also within intro no mention on why POR is imp - such as producing different knowledge - would be useful to link this topic to science and why its imp for science.

Page 7, line 19: Why did the autor team not include "patients"?

Our author team is comprised of an interdisciplinary group of health professionals from clinical practice, academia and from our Unit, supported by an academic health librarian
The stated aim of the unit is "an initiative called the Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) encouraging patient-oriented research (POR) that engages patients as equal partners in research teams alongside researchers, healthcare providers and health system decision-makers".

But in this paper there is division - how is this equal partners?

To reflect on the competencies in the literature, we engaged a Group of Advisers with POR-related experience representing each of our four stakeholder groups.

Page 11 - line 38 - again lists terms emerging from search. I would expect to see service user led research here, survivor research, peer research, community participation, community engagement. Most terms are all linked to "patient" but that is not how all health disciplines describe "patients".

Page 11, line 51 - says team members reviewed and grouped competencies. I think more detail needed here on group skills and backgrounds. Was this authors, or were patients involved too?

Overall - I started to struggle with the results section. I didn't expect to - but on reading the transcript some very bold statements are made which I think are from the 35 papers you have reviewed. However, it isn't clear if this is a summary from the author team - or direct statements from the literature, even though each one is referenced. And this is important as it is listing a lot of statements that could be contested.

Page 12 results

Line 52 This statement from literature

Researchers are expected to understand participatory research is an approach to research and not a method in and of itself (19).

Just noting this maybe contested. Might be worth in discussion acknowledging this is an emerging area of work - competencies and frameworks are not fixed. They are emerging. That statement is worth debating!!! And what is the different between participatory research and participatory action research which is a research method. I think this is where language comes in - but as presented this is confusing and I think needs clarification.
Page 13 - line 9 - the terms engage is used here - not involve. That must be a choice by the authorship team or direct from the literature. Again, I think you need to be transparent about why you have chosen which terms to use in your write up. Engagement and involvement are different things in the UK - lots of discussion and debate about this.

"engage patients and public partners in research"

Another issue is what you do as an author team mean by partners when you write it here? What is partnership. As its easy to write this word but very hard (in my experience) to open up the research process for patients to be partners. And this has not been acknowledged yet. Just this concept means different things to different people. As the paper is focused upon the skills needed for developing partnerships I think you need to situate all of these tricky issues upfront in literature and decisions made by the team. Maybe list in a table all the key terms (involvement, engagement, community) and reflect in the team on their contested nature but in your review how you've used the language of the review - not the language you might choose.

Line 12 -now using the involved term (not engage as in sentence above).

"Knowledge related to the involved community was reported as comprehension of community knowledge"

Under participatory approaches, in any of the reviews was there a sense that "patients" can also be researchers? I don't know where that is dealt with - if at all - but this is v imp in the wider literature. Service user researchers, consumer researchers. Again part of the complexity in this field of work.

Page 16, line 27 - this term is different to those used above "Patient-involved researchers' " not sure about this term? Suggested working

Researchers' attitudes, among those that deliver POR, represent an inclination to participate and collaborate, such as to build partnerships and relationships

Page 23 - say who the expert group of advisers were - how many - backgrounds?
Page 23, line 22 is this the term used by this citation - 83 "partnered research"? links ot point above I think you need a list of these terms and say you use those selected by authors - it not your language - or is it?

"who reflected on the 'lessons learned' from conducting partnered research"

Page 26 - it may not be useful but we consider dissent in a framework of "critical friend" - so there is a way to be critical; and that is crucial in this work.

Line 22 - did the literature not pick up the debate about "lay" such as the paper by Richard Ives.

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