Reviewer's report

Title: Intensive management for moderate rheumatoid arthritis: a qualitative study of patients' and practitioners' views

Version: 0 Date: 06 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Elizabeth Hulen

Reviewer's report:

The aims of this study are to explore patient and practitioner perspectives on feasibility and acceptability of intensive management for RA and experience of receiving/providing intensive management for RA. This is an important study given that qualitative work nestled within clinical trials are uncommon and little is known about how patients with moderate RA view biologic therapies.

This is up to the authors, but I would prefer if the title had "nurses" instead of "practitioners" since the practitioners can be used without specificity.

Lines 19-20: This is an awkward sentence and the authors should provide a more detailed definition of "intensive management"

There is important literature in the introduction section. However, the authors should make this section more succinct.

Methods section: There is too much passive voice throughout the entire methods section. It is unclear to the reader who did what and when.

Lines 44-50 I am confused on what the patient and practitioner inclusion/exclusion criteria are. The authors need to make this section clearer and consider the order in which the information is presented.

Data Collection: Who conducted the interviews? Who developed the interview guides? What kinds of questions/domains are on the interview guides? What kind of qualitative training did the interviewer(s) have?

Data Analysis: Who did the first round of coding? Again, all the passive voice makes it difficult and/or impossible to determine who did what. Need a citation for the analytic strategy.

The "themes" listed in the table aren't really themes. They are domains. Themes describe some sort of action or pattern within the data and because you said this was exploratory one might expect to see inductive thematic categories. These 'themes' appear very deductive as their identification seems to be have been directed by the research questions which indicates to me that the authors used a deductive approach. This does not make the results any less valuable, but
the methods section needs to be re-worked to accurately describe how the authors conducted the analysis.

For example, a theme of the domain "Monthly appointments" would be "patients need flexibility" - the results need to be reorganized to reflect accurate descriptions of domains, themes, and sub-themes.

Please see:

Guest, Greg; MacQueen, Namey (2012). "Introduction to Thematic Analysis". Applied Thematic Analysis.


Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published
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