

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

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ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Functionality and feedback: A protocol for a realist synthesis of the collation, interpretation and utilisation of PROMs data to improve patient care
AUTHORS	Greenhalgh, Joanne; Pawson, Ray; Wright, Judy; Black, Nick; Valderas, Jose; Meads, David; Gibbons, Elizabeth; Wood, Lawrence; Wood, Charlotte; Mills, Chris; Dalkin, Sonia

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

REVIEWER	Claudia Bausewein Department of Palliative Medicine Munich University Hospital
REVIEW RETURNED	02-Jun-2014

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>Thank you for asking me to review this very interesting protocol on a realist synthesis of the collation, interpretation and utilisation of PROMs data to improve patient care.</p> <p>The collection and use of PROMs is gaining increasing momentum in health care and there is an increasing number of publications covering various aspects of this important topic. The authors set out on a highly relevant but challenging project to conduct a realist synthesis of the evidence on PROMs in different areas to understand by what means and in what circumstances the feedback of PROMs data leads to the intended service improvements. The authors present the protocol for this review. If successful, this would give clinicians, key stakeholders, policy makers and others a much better understand of the processes of implementation and successful use of PROMs both on an individual and aggregate level.</p> <p>I would recommend publishing this protocol with a few minor revisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Overall, the protocol is well written and the authors try to describe in detail a very complex review process, which at times reads very abstract and theoretical. Where examples are used (especially in the synthesis section), it is easier for the reader who is not so familiar with the subject to follow. Therefore, where possible, the protocol would benefit from a few more examples.2. The complexity of the review is shown in three different aims with several objectives and also in various search strategies. For better understanding, a tabular presentation, e.g. of the aims and objectives or of the search strategies with the different concepts would be helpful to better understand the planned process.3. Page 10, line 23: The described starting point for this step are existing quantitative and qualitative reviews. It is not clear whether the authors will use the overall results of these reviews or whether they use these reviews to identify primary studies.
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	<p>4. Page 10, line 50: Are the three concepts described here different to the three concepts described on page 9? As suggested above, a tabular presentation might help the reader to follow the steps better.</p> <p>5. Page 11, line 56: What is the RAMESES project? As the acronym is not used before, it should be explained and referenced.</p> <p>6. Would it be possible to have information on how many people will do the literature searches, who will extract the data and conduct the quality analyses etc. I mean not necessarily to have specific names but to get an idea how many people will be involved in this process and the individual steps.</p>
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REVIEWER	Todd Edwards University of Washington, United States
REVIEW RETURNED	12-Jun-2014

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>This paper proposes a protocol for systematic review of use of PROMs in clinical care based on an existing methodology developed by one of the authors for evaluating complex interventions. Considering the complex and multi-level nature of using PROMs in clinical care, this framework appears appropriate. Ideally I would like to see the systematic review itself in this paper, but will look forward to that in a follow-on publication.</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Response to reviewers comments for manuscript 2014-005601

We thank the reviewers for their useful comments. We have addressed them in the following way:

1. Overall, the protocol is well written and the authors try to describe in detail a very complex review process, which at times reads very abstract and theoretical. Where examples are used (especially in the synthesis section), it is easier for the reader who is not so familiar with the subject to follow. Therefore, where possible, the protocol would benefit from a few more examples.

We have provided further examples of the complexity of the intervention in the ‘existing evidence’ section (pages 6-8). We also provide further examples in the methodology section – e.g. in the ‘Prioritising theories for review’ section on p 11 we provide examples of some of the blockages that may need to be overcome if PROMs feedback is going to improve patient care at the aggregate level. We have also expanded one particular example in the synthesis section to illustrate the process of triangulation (p 15-16).

2. The complexity of the review is shown in three different aims with several objectives and also in various search strategies. For better understanding, a tabular presentation, e.g. of the aims and objectives or of the search strategies with the different concepts would be helpful to better understand the planned process.

We have now provided a table (Table 1) for the theory searches and a table (Table 2) for the evidence searches and slightly modified text to make the structure of the searches clearer.

3. Page 10, line 23: The described starting point for this step are existing quantitative and qualitative reviews. It is not clear whether the authors will use the overall results of these reviews or whether they use these reviews to identify primary studies.

We have clarified the text in the search strategies: evidence reviews and primary studies section to

indicate that we will use the reviews to provide information on outcome patterns (for quantitative reviews) and potential mechanisms (qualitative reviews) and as a source of studies.

4. Page 10, line 50: Are the three concepts described here different to the three concepts described on page 9? As suggested above, a tabular presentation might help the reader to follow the steps better.

We have now clarified this through modifying the text and providing tables.

5. Page 11, line 56: What is the RAMESES project? As the acronym is not used before, it should be explained and referenced.

We have now provided the full name of this project (p14)

6. Would it be possible to have information on how many people will do the literature searches, who will extract the data and conduct the quality analyses etc. I mean not necessarily to have specific names but to get an idea how many people will be involved in this process and the individual steps.

We have now clarified how this process will take place (p14)