Reviewer's report

Title: National targets, process transformation and local consequences in an NHS Emergency Department (ED): a qualitative study

Version: 2 Date: 4 September 2013

Reviewer: Hans Thulesius

Reviewer's report:

This ms presents a qualitative data analysis of 28 individual interviews with people working at an ED in the UK where a 4 hour wait target was implemented.

Major Compulsory Revisions

The result analysis is a mixture of concepts and description but the descriptive data ascends the conceptual with an abundance of citations which makes it a bit boring to read at least if you are trained to and like to look for theoretical content that can add to scientific knowledge and not be too much particularistic description.

So I would advice to reduce citations or concentrate them and/or rewrite into summarized descriptions with a few words cited instead of entire chunks of citations.

By doing so the authors can introduce their (although borrowed) concept of sociootechnical ensemble already in the results and make the four themes properties of how a sociootechnical ensemble looks like in their data.

So when it comes to the results I like the four theme names which make sense. Especially interesting is the mention of the redesign of the ED, the conceptualisation of compartmentalisation. But this is mentioned too little in the ms and not at all in the abstract.

On the contrary is the mention in the abstract of new professional roles development not there in the results section.

The discussion should in my opinion start with one or two paras summarizing the results.

Then discuss the results in relation to literature. However, I find no discussion on "compartmentalisation", "constraints" of time, "bridged time and space" thru IT or "modernization". There is not much lit discussion on the main concept of sociootechnical ensemble either apart from the book where it was introduced.

Also in my opinion there is too much political fluf talk in the discussion. At least from my non UK perspective. So if fluf talk is reduced there is plenty of room to develop the theoretical aspects of this ms, see above, which I find promising.

All in all there is too little theoretical explanatory development of the themes in the results and lit comparisons in the discussion. The authors are encouraged to
write more theoretical memos on the themes and then develop and summarize conceptual data in the results since the suggested reduced descriptive citation bulk leaves room for this. The development of themes should circle around the concept of sociothechnical ensemble if this makes enough sense and the abstract should reflect the results and discussion.

Minor essential revisions

Refs should not include issue nr and there needs to be a better English brush of the text since there are some flaws here and there.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests