Reviewer's report

Title: Unregulated provider perceptions of audit and feedback reports in long-term care: Cross-sectional survey findings from a quality improvement intervention

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Reviewer: Vincent Mor

Reviewer's report:

This paper addresses the interesting issue of how nurses aides (unregulated providers) interpret and feel about "outcome reports" about the care provided to residents of the facilities in which they work. While interesting, there are some substantial issues that the authors need to repair since as it stands the paper doesn't really offer a lot.

Compulsory Revisions:

While it may appear to be a minor point, the use of the term "unregulated providers" may referring to unlicensed staff working in nursing homes may be commonplace in Canada, at least for the US market, this term refers to unregulated facilities such as Assisted Living or even other types of housing since while we refer to physicians as "providers" nurses aides tend to be referred to as unlicensed staff.

The questions asked of the staff about getting performance reports back are very general and don't seem to have much direct connection with the activities of the respondents. While the outcome reports are potentially relevant to aides' activities, the questions aren't referring to what the aides do or how they feel that the reports reflect the aides' contributions to these outcomes. It would have been better to have the questions pertain to the aides. At a minimum including this as a limitation is necessary since otherwise the connection between the background and the methods.

The decision to drop discordant responses on several of the questions ends up "stacking the deck" in favor of the hypothesized relationship. It is perfectly possible dropping inconsistent responses is probably inappropriate since it might be the case that individuals could reasonably find something useful that they didn't entirely understand. Not focusing on something that is the responsibility of the aides makes it difficult to understand what it is that aides are reacting to. It would have been preferable to have a unit specific outcome measure of satisfaction or care management that the aide might be more directly responsible for. As it is, these are pictures of the outcome scores pertaining to the whole building and while interesting might not be meaningful to the aides. Thus, their responses are more likely to be intellectualizations than responses related to understanding the connection between the charts and quality.
Finally, dropping missing data may not be an issue, but it could be creating bias. How many cases were dropped.

Minor Issues:

The emphasis on the culture change literature is welcomed, but there is limited connection between aides being engaged in quality improvement and how aides work together in teams. Indeed, there is a lot emphasis on teams but the data in fact don’t pertain much to teams.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

No competing interests.