Reviewer's report

Title: IT adoption of Clinical Information Systems in Austrian and German Hospitals: Results of a Comparative Survey with a Focus on Nursing

Version: 3 Date: 10 November 2009

Reviewer: Jos Aarts

Reviewer's report:

I have read the paper completely and it has improved significantly. I have however a few remarks. In the abstract the authors suggest that the size of a country may be related to the ability of adapting innovations in practice, i.e. the larger the country, the more difficult it becomes. What is the basis for this suggestion? Is there a theoretical explanation? On page 5 the authors describe the introduction "leistungsbezogene Krankenhausfinanzierung" and offer the translation "case-based system of financing." Should one rather talk about "performance based system of financing", since this seems to me a more appropriate translation, while the term "case" is meaningless. The authors argue that mandatory use of nursing diagnoses may be a factor that incites adoption of IT. They also mention that it requires critical thinking of nurses. How does this relate to the only slow transition from hospital-based diploma tot "Fachhochschule" based bachelor education? Generally hospital-based education is far more instrumental than university-based education. In my studies of nursing documentation there is a huge discrepancy between documenting in structured forms and actual documenting in other sources. The former is considered busywork to serve someone else's purposes and therefore often completely meaningless. I would not be surprised if there similar differences in Germany and Austria between a virtual reality created by government documentation requirements and actual documentation. I am interested in the authors' thoughts about it and what it means for the conclusions that they can draw from this comparative study.

Then to conclude the language could be improved. Though there are no blatant grammatical errors, wording in some case is odd. A few examples:

Page 5: parallelism refers to technical term in linguistics or mathematics. Here parallel seems more appropriate.

Page 13: "which rouse the actors concerned." What do the authors mean?

Page 13: "installation numbers...". I suggest:"the number of electronic archive systems."

In summary the language used seems to be often a literal translation of German, that leads to expressions that are grammatically correct, but uncommon in use.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

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.