Reviewer's report

Title: The Status of IT Service Management in Health Care - ITIL in selected European Countries

Version: 1 Date: 11 May 2011

Reviewer: Aileen Cater-Steel

Reviewer's report:

The title and abstract accurately convey what has been found and the question posed by the authors is well defined. The methods are not well described. For example, how was the content analysis performed on the open questions?

The manuscript does not adhere to the relevant standards for reporting - missing values need to be managed. Although limitations of the work are clearly stated the conclusion is weak.

- Major Compulsory Revisions
  1. The data is presented in a misleading way. For example, there were 75 responses, 5 were implementing ITIL – that is 6%. It is reported in Table 8 as 13% as non-response is ignored.
  2. The headings in tables 2-10 are incorrect. The maximum in each column is highlighted, not each row.
  3. Section 6.6 Study Limitations states the study is intended to act as a pilot study. This is not mentioned earlier and 75 hospitals is a large number for a pilot. One is left wondering about the details of the main study?
  4. Details of the data collection instrument are brief. It is not clear what options were presented to the respondents – “a given set of possible answers”. For example, in section 5.4, table 7, 7 respondents selected ‘other benefits’ – what were these benefits? Were only three reasons provided? On what basis were these reasons selected? From prior research?
  5. There is no theoretical foundation and very little prior academic research on ITIL or ITSM is reviewed.
  6. The data is outdated – collected early 2008. Only 5 of 75 had implemented any ITIL processes. A further 8 intended to implement ITIL in the next 2 years. So they would have by now.
  7. In section 1.2, it is important to state that organisations can be certified to ISO/IEC 20000.
- Needs some language corrections. The English expression is awkward and needs to be edited e.g. managers ‘say to be’ – should be ‘claim to be’. ‘Respondents that felt’ – should be ‘respondents who felt’. ‘How far are the …’ – ‘should be how advanced are the…’, the next group ‘form’ – should be ‘from’, very few ‘implementation’ – should be ‘implementations’

- Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions
- Reject because scientifically unsound
- Reject because too small an advance to publish

Statistical review: Yes, but it does not need an expert statistician to correct the basic errors. The statistics do need to be reviewed but they are not very complex.

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

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