Reviewer's report

Title: The implementation of integrated care: the empirical validation of the Development Model for Integrated Care.

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Reviewer: Hubertus JM Vrijhoef

Reviewer's report:

Although this is an interesting paper it needs to overcome the following major shortcomings:

- it lacks a proper description of what integration is. Various concepts are mentioned but not explained. Authors could make use of the work by Leutz, by Kodner, by the WHO, etc.;

- the background lacks more currently published insights into this area as for example the paper by Enthoven (2009), the one by Ham (2009/2010) and reports from the Nuffield Trust re integrated care;

- DMIC needs to be related to similar instruments when describing the tool as well as discussing it. One can think about the model by Lemmens et al., the ACIC by Wagner et al. and/or PRISM by Feldstein et al.

- results could be more interesting if scores on relevance and implementation are related. Further, authors state DMIC can be of support to practices, but do not illustrate this. It would be a missed opportunity to give readers the impression that this is -just- another scientific tool;

- the recommendations as presented do not follow from the methods/ study limitations nor from the findings. As a matter of fact, most recommendations are rather speculative and need to be rewritten.

Some more detailed feedback:

- pg 6. what are ‘integrated care practitioners’? Do these exist?
- pg 7. 36,000 patients suffer from AMI. Add: in the Netherlands
- pg 12 how much time is needed to fill out the survey?
- pg 15. authors write about the applicability of the model, but did not describe how this was measured
- pg 17. in addition to financial incentives one can think of other incentives
- pg 19. what cut off points do we need to think of when applying the model for purposes of benchmarking?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
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 I have no competing interests