Reviewer's report

Title: The ties that bind: an integrative framework of Physician-Hospital Alignment

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Reviewer: Neeltje van den Berg

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This paper deals with principles and components of an integrative framework of physician-hospital alignment. The background describes some principle approaches of modelling the cooperation between hospitals and physicians. The main part of the paper is a discussion about theories of analysing the relationship between hospitals and physicians and the different components of a possible model.

Major points:
A thorough description of the current situation and a detailed analysis of existing problems are largely missing. As a consequence, it is unclear how a conceptual framework should be designed to solve these problems. The described model is very basic, containing only few components and interactions. Interactions between economic and non-economic factors are missing.

Figure 1 is the core of the paper, but a reference and a detailed description in the text are missing. Unclear is why e.g. the arrow from the field “non-economic integration” via trust to the field “economic integration” has only one direction.

Page 4: Here, a third approach “clinical integration” is discussed. This approach is not considered in the framework and not referenced in figure 1.

Minor points:
Page 6: The abbreviation HPR is not written out in full.

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 that I have no competing interests