Reviewer’s report

Title: Sustainable practice change: Professionals' experiences with a child health intervention programme in Sweden

Version: 1 Date: 10 September 2010

Reviewer: Darcey Terris

Reviewer’s report:

The authors present an interesting and informative qualitative study of barriers and facilitators to sustained practice change. The findings are likely relevant to many areas of practice and in settings beyond those encountered in the Salut Study. Significant improvements, however, are needed in the manuscript’s presentation. Review by a native English writer is recommended.

I have organized my comments based on the manuscript sections:

Title: The title is too general. The multi-sectoral and health promotion focus of the Salut Study are not reflected in the current title.

Abstract: In general, more specificity / less qualitative wording (e.g. “powerful facilitating factors”) is needed.

1. You begin discussing both adoption and sustainability, although the focus of your study is on sustainability. This may be confusing to the reader.
2. What is meant by “adequate methods” in the first sentence?
3. A brief description of the Salut program and its major elements is missing.
4. A definition of “open pre-schools” is missing.
5. A description, including length of time, for the implementation phase is missing. Is the two years from the start of the program or from the end of the implementation phase?

Background: I would stick to one term (sustainability, compliance, adherence…) and use it consistently throughout the manuscript. Otherwise Readers may think you are discussing more than one construct.

Methods:
1. Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) may be a more recognizable form of the Deming cycle.
2. The description of the involved sectors should come earlier in the methods section.
3. Inclusion of a figure showing the timeline for development and implementation of the Salut program and the study evaluation would help the Reader.
4. Was there any objective assessment of sustainability, e.g. through review of
records? The study would be strengthened if this data could also be presented. If not, it should be included as a possible limitation in the Discussion section.

5. A brief description of the Grol and Wensing model should be included in the text.

6. The second to last sentence under “data analysis” needs attention. Do you mean something along the lines of “In the results section, when we refer to “few participants” 1-4 participants refereed to a specific theme, …”

7. Do you mean “To strengthen the validity and reliability” of the analysis” in the second sentence under the subsection “Trustworthiness”. Also, I am unfamiliar with the use of the term “trustworthiness” in the presentation of qualitative data.

Results: I would restructure the Results section in its entirety.

1. Sometimes the same theme is identified as both a facilitator and a barrier (e.g. the active research phase, the presence of or lack of active management support). I would reorganize the results section around key themes and then discuss themes from both perspectives, if appropriate.

2. The quotations included are very informative, but unevenly presented throughout the Results. Sometimes important themes get little or no evidence presented, while others are given multiple, largely redundant quotes.

3. The use of the phrase “level of context” is also confusing to me. Context happens at all levels.

Discussion: The Discussion section is lengthy and often redundant with the Results section.

1. Both the Results and Discussion sections would benefit from re-organization, with a view to focusing on key themes. The full findings can then remain in Table 3 for those who want a broader perspective.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

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

**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 interest.