Reviewer's report

Title: A four-year, systems-wide intervention promoting interprofessional collaboration

Version: 2 Date: 15 February 2012

Reviewer: Ruairidh Milne

Reviewer's report:

In relation to Dr Reid’s comments

1) The research questions are contained in the background and are inadequately defined, especially 1) & 3): "other activities" need expanded, and uncertainty about participants judging the study’s goals.

Authors’ response: We appreciate these comments. The research questions have been more clearly defined, with the phrasing consistent with that in the remainder of the paper.

My assessment: OK for aim 1 but aim 3 is little changed

2) The results need to be laid out more clearly and in relation to the aims. Most results emerge in the discussion.

Authors’ response: In the Results section the results have now been specifically linked to the research aims. Figure 3 has been moved to the Results section from the Discussion section.

My assessment: OK

3) Assumptions are made and judgemental comments such as "decline in attitudes".

Authors’ response: This statement is a summary of the results found rather than a judgemental evaluation. We have rephrased it to read ‘less favourable attitudes’ rather than ‘decline’. We have also clarified that this statement refers to the four attitudinal subscales only. We go on to point out that overall the attitudes held were favourable. The respondents did not hold beliefs about the importance of doctor centrality.

The suggestion to use focus groups to examine the results is a good one. Unfortunately with the conclusion of the study it is now not possible to be implemented. We will consider its use in future projects.

My assessment: In the revised MS that I was sent, the change from 'decline' to 'less favourable' could not be seen. I also could find no reference to the idea of focus groups for future projects.
4) The interventions are poorly defined and seem too wide ranging in relation to the responses (each respondent replied once on average).

Authors’ response: A table providing examples of interventions, and their focus, has now been included in the manuscript.

My assessment: OK

5) RIPLS. My assessment: OK

6) Other
   - define terms used such as "professionalism"

Authors’ response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. This term, a central construct in our paper, is defined by the literature analysis in the Background, and we have provided a brief, explicit definition to frame the paper.

My assessment: The only term defined in the paper is interprofessionalism. I could not find any other definitions

   - developing the discussion. My assessment: OK