Reviewer's report

Title: Variations in risk perceptions: A qualitative study of why unnecessary urinary catheter use continues to be problematic

Version: 3 Date: 13 February 2013

Reviewer: Carolyn Tarrant

Reviewer's report:

I feel that the authors have justified their use of the pre-existing risk framework, and have described their methods and the sample clearly.

Some of the study findings fit neatly within the concepts in this framework, and I agree that the framework enables a deeper insight into the data, including tensions between risks of catheter use and other patient safety concerns such as falls.

Discretionary (but important!) revisions:

Where their findings diverge from the risk framework they should show how this relates to broader patient safety literature. For example, ‘workarounds’ is a distinct concept to ‘cutting corners’, and there is extensive literature on this topic (e.g. Halbesleben JR, Wakefield DS, Wakefield BJ. Work-arounds in health care settings: literature review and research agenda. Health Care Manage Rev. 2008;33(1):2–12.).

The authors should also acknowledge that they are using the concept of process weakness in a slightly different way to its original conceptualization. The original concept relates to failings in organizational processes that create risk; staff try to compensate for these risks to avoid harm, but are unlikely to take responsibility for addressing the failing directly. In the current paper the authors are using the concept to describe problems that arise from mismatch between processes in the bundle and pre-existing organizational processes and priorities for clinical management of patients – staff are trying to undertake processes in the bundle in contexts where they do not ‘fit’ perfectly.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests