Reviewer's report

Title: Stakeholder perspectives on implementing accreditation programs: a qualitative study of enabling factors

Version: 1 Date: 11 June 2013

Reviewer: Fadi El-Jardali

Reviewer's report:

This paper identifies the critical enabling factors related to implementing accreditation programs, which is a topic that yet still have limited evidence in literature. The paper adds good knowledge to existing literature.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

In the paper, the authors need to provide more information on how the hypothesis was derived including its theoretical basis.

In terms of the methods, particularly the sample and procedure, there is not enough information given about the sample. For example, how the representatives from all states and territories were selected. Was there a sampling criteria or framework? And how and on what basis the sample was supplemented by selected health professionals from accredited public and private organizations. This is important in light of the fact that health professionals were recruited in 14 educational workshops. It is important that authors provide more information and details. Table 1 needs to be better explained.

In terms of the focus groups and individual interviews, how it was decided and what was the average number per focus group. Authors needs to provide the interview questions they developed and how the questions were developed.

In terms of data analysis, it would be useful to explain how the themes were identified from the data. Also, it is important to explain to readers how the results were fed back via conferences and meetings to stakeholders and study participants to test and validate the findings. How was this done? Was this communicated to all study participants? How the other international stakeholders were identified. How were their responses in comparison to study participants, etc? There is very little information about this part of the methods. It would be good to explore the option of differentiating responses among group to identify divergent view.

In terms of the discussion section, it is useful that authors identify what are the key results that came out from their study and how it is different (or not) from the one in current literature. It would be useful to explain more how such findings can be relevant to other settings and countries.

In terms of the limitations outlined in the paper, there are additional ones that
need to be included, particularly about the methods in terms of identifying stakeholders and respondents.

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest 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'