Reviewer's report

Title: Important challenges for coordination and inter-municipal cooperation in health care services: A Delphi study

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Reviewer: Sarah McIntyre

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review Important challenges for coordination and inter-municipal cooperation in health care services: A Delphi study

I commend this group for trying to tackle what is clearly a complex issue in Norway. I think the principals that they discuss are transferable around the world. My main comments are regarding the methodology.

Major compulsory revisions:

Methods

1. There is a very small n value used in this paper. Although the authors give great detail in text and figure 1 about how the participants were identified from the 31 emails passed on, there is no mention as to why the other 400 were not invited in the first place. With over 400 municipalities and only 19 participating (5%), can the authors at least describe the process of sending the first email to only 79?

2. Should this also be in the limitations?

3. I have not read a Delphi methodology like this before, I suggest they use the terminology modified-Delphi. There are three different “consensus” methods used in different rounds. I have not seen this before, however it seemed to be appropriate for the author’s needs.

Introduction and discussion

1. The discussion is way too long. I suggest that the authors cut the discussion back considerably.

2. I also think that the Introduction could be much tighter, there is clearly a need for this research, but it could be stated a lot quicker.

3. In the limitations, I think it is a big leap to generalise that others have found no difference between those who report and those who don’t.

This study is valid and will be more coherent with a tighter introduction and discussion. The conclusions drawn are supported by the data. There are some methodological questions that I have, and if these are answered and included in
the paper it will make it a stronger one. Congratulations, and I look forward to reading the research findings that follow from this process.