Reviewer’s report

Title: The patient safety culture as perceived by staff at two different emergency departments before and after introducing a flow-oriented working model with team triage and lean principles: a repeated cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 7 August 2013

Reviewer: Peter Groenewegen

Reviewer’s report:

The authors compare patient safety culture on two emergency departments in two hospitals before and after a quality improvement project.

There are a number of serious flaws in this paper. Basically they are two unrelated case studies, the only thing that connects them is the measurement of patient safety culture.

- There are two central assertions backed up with a reference. The first states that: ‘The patient safety culture in an institution has a great impact on patient safety [14]’. (p. 4). This reference, however, is not about the relation between patient safety culture and patient safety but about the relationship between organizational culture and patient safety climate. The second states that: ‘However, the evidence supporting the effectiveness of these strategies [PG: strategies designed to improve patient safety culture and patient safety] within hospitals is limited [21]’. This reference is not about strategies to improve patient safety culture but contains an analysis of the psychometric properties of different questionnaires to measure safety climate.

- There is no clear design in the study to answer a specific question about the effects of improvement projects on patient safety culture. The improvement projects are not designed to improve patient safety culture. Moreover, the improvement projects are not described in detail. It is therefore unclear what the theoretical basis and the supposed mechanisms are that would connect these improvement projects to changes in patient safety culture.

- The measurements were two years apart. It is unclear to what extent differences between measurements can be attributed to employee turnover.

The manuscript has no relevance whatsoever for an international audience.

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

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'