Reviewer's report

Title: An Exploration of Barriers to the Implementation of Clinical Practice Guidelines in Singapore Hospitals

Version: 2 Date: 1 October 2007

Reviewer: Jo Rycroft-Malone

Reviewer's report:

General
I was interested to learn about your research, particularly as you state, little work such as this has been published from Asia.

I think the paper could make a stronger contribution, it is little too descriptive in its current form - perhaps some of the following comments will be helpful.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Revisit the background section of the paper to think about the flow and what key issues you should be introducing. There are a number of different issues raised about guideline implementation, changing practice in/across the different professions, and you also make theoretical points. It then seems to me that not all of these are relevant to the substance of your paper, because for example you do not follow up on any of the theoretical issues (and these do not seem to have informed your methods), or how your survey of nurses' perceptions may influence the evidence base about changing different professional's behaviour. As a reader the issues feel all jumbled together, and therefore the focus of your paper is not clear from the outset.

There is more evidence that could be included re changing nurses' practice - e.g. Foxcroft review and recent Thompson review on research utilisation. It goes back to what the focus of the paper is about - for me it is about assessing nurses' perceptions about barriers and facilitators (not the professions more broadly).

I was wondering whether whilst you talk about the implementation of clinical guidelines generally, there are more issues about the implementation of guidelines about falls preventions specifically that should be considered? - particularly in your context.

A better link between the background and methods section could be made with a clearer statement about the aim of the research.

It would be helpful to have a little more detail about your context - are Singapore's acute care hospitals similar to hospitals in other countries for
example.

Did the hospitals have similar characteristics?

Some detail about how the questionnaire items were reworded would aid transparency.

Were there any within site or across site differences that accounted for some of the variation in your findings? Did you check whether there was any statistical difference between some of the means across sites?

I found the discussion a little too descriptive. It was helpful that you referred to how your research related to others', but I wanted to know how you are going to use this information to design your interventions. I think this is where this paper could potentially add to the evidence base. Whilst previous research/authors state we need to tailor interventions - what is lacking is information about how others' have done this. Including an in-depth consideration of this would enhance your paper considerably. Consideration of how you would evaluate these would also be a useful addition.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

I don't think the title accurately reflects the content/substance of the paper. Specifically I think you should signpost potential readers to the fact that it is a study about nurses' perceptions, and about the implementation of clinical practice guidelines about falls prevention.

There are a small amount of typos throught the manuscript, and some sentences that would benefit from grammar revision.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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