Reviewer’s report

Title: Organisational culture, team climate and diabetes care in small office-based practices

Version: 1 Date: 29 February 2008

Reviewer: Julie Schmittdief

Reviewer’s report:

This is a clear and well-written article on an important topic, namely the effect of climate and culture on patient process and outcome measures in diabetes. The Discussion section is a particularly thoughtful interpretation of the results and the work’s implications. The manuscript would benefit, however, from including more details on the study methods, particularly in regards to the patient and provider surveys and the intervention in which this culture/climate study is embedded. The analysis would also benefit from patient case-mix adjustment.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. The authors should include more information about the intervention in primary care that this study stems from; this context could be important in interpreting the results, especially since the provider survey was implemented post-intervention.

2. Include more information about when the patient outcomes in the study were obtained from the EMR. The manuscript states that they were “post-intervention,” but does not give a time window for when outcomes were assessed.

3. More details about the implementation of the patient survey and other potential variables from it besides age and gender that could be used in the analysis should be provided.

4. The authors have access to both patient survey and EMR data, and yet patient case mix is not accounted for in the analysis. Since this could have a significant effect on the process and outcome measures used as dependent variables, case mix should be adjusted for in these analyses if at all possible.

5. The limitations section discusses the potential impact of small provider sample size on the results, but not the small number of patients. I am concerned that 752 patients may not provide enough power to detect effect sizes using the hierarchical models appropriately employed in this study. This should be discussed.

6. The authors should discuss any potential implications of national cultural differences (much of previous work in this area was done in the UK) in interpreting these results.

Minor Essential Revisions
6. The Results section should include a breakdown of response rates by provider type, not just the 63% given overall.

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

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no competing interests.