Reviewer's report

**Title:** Development of an instrument to measure organizational context in healthcare: the Alberta Context Tool

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 28 July 2009

**Reviewer:** Ronald Batenburg

**Reviewer's report:**

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

1. The authors do not provide a clear argumentation for using/selecting/building upon the PARiHS framework. The critics and acknowledgments seems to vary throughout the paper, confusing the reader about how to the authors 'really' judge the framework. For instance, on page 9 it is stated that the framework is "conceptually coherent" but also "developmental". On page 12 it is said that (resource) "elements have not yet been well developed", but still the framework was (as such?) "suitable for our purposes". Then on page 13, it is (re)stated that additional literature is "needed to create what we beleived was a reasonable set of concepts", but quite unspecifically as it remains unclear what/which literature/concepts were selected to do this, and why these. In contrast, the two practical arguments mentioned on page 13 to adapt the PARiSH framework (brief, modifiable) are quite clear and straightforward, leaving the impression that these are the *actual* drivers to develop the ACT. In other words, the arguments to develop the new tool/framework ACT (instead of fully adapting PARiSH), from a content perspective, remain too vague as worded by quotes as "what we believed", "our understanding" on page 13. The additional text on page 14 on "the selection of the conceptual framework", does not clarifies this point either. The argument that the authors have the opportunity to "talk" to the PARiSH developers gives an odd impression. More importantly, the argumentations at the end of page 14 on what have been selected and added to the framework, remain pragmatic (what is "influenced by work"?) or even opportunistic (i.e. researchers, obviously, always bring in expertise..)

2. From phase 2 on (page 15), the paper refers to "team members", but it is hard to discover who and how many these are (the summary speaks about "researchers"). Considering the tasks as described on this same page, these team members can only be experienced and dedicated researchers indeed. How many team members were involved? Were the authors themselves also team members? How were the team members recruited and selected? Were they colleagues or students of the authors? This is important to know, to judge the reliability of this part of the study. In particular, as for phase 4, the size and composition of the focus groups *are* presented.

3. The aimed time to complete the survey (20 minutes max) was prominently argued as one of the main criteria at the beginning of the tool development. This
seemed to have "disappeared" during the subsequent pages however. More importantly, it need to be described how this criteria was applied. Was it only taken into by the focus groups? How?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance 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