Reviewer's report

Title: Revisiting Interaction in Knowledge Translation

Version: 1 Date: 7 May 2007

Reviewer: Luciana Ballini

Reviewer's report:

General
The paper has a very good background section which in brief provides the terms of reference for the authors’ research question and an outline of main current theoretical approaches and contribution. In this section the reader is able to identify the main issues to be explored regarding knowledge translation and research utilization, such as style, timing and content of interaction, and to get an overview of the suggestions made in literature.

Having identified the interaction model as they object of study, the authors raise attention to the necessity of outlining determinants of “successful” interaction and the choice of a case study, as an explorative tool aimed at isolating some of the constituent elements of such interaction, seems appropriate. They suggest some elements of process (“conditions under which various interactive approaches are more or less successful”) and the possible role of modifying factors such as “nature of research”.

Having said that I will list some reservations I have with the reporting of the study.

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

1. I would hold that a case study is appropriate for giving analytical insight, rather than analytical generalizations (top of page 6) and that other study designs can build on such analytical insights to later test and generalize definition of variables and relations between variables.

2. A case study helps to describe in details process and outcome and relations between the two. I would therefore regard the authors’ interest limited to “how this knowledge translation may have facilitated a response to the CAES data, neglecting “whether it facilitated a response” (bottom of page 5) as a missing opportunity or at least puzzling. The case study design does not preclude researcher from identifying specific expected outcomes to be evaluated and set against the process. Indeed the results suggest that the knowledge translation strategy “worked” for some things but not for others and it would have been clearer to have the main outcomes stated and argued for beforehand.

3. Results could be reported in a more structured way, with more information on the sampling methods and letting the few extracts from the interviews to act as corollary rather than as actual data. I would also be more cautious when presenting results, avoiding statement like “the forums were successful at …” or “our data show that ….”, and use data to outline positive and negative outcomes as “perceived” by respondents.

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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)

4. I found the discussion on the differences between the instrumental and conceptual use of research quite interesting and maybe it would have done more justice to the study to have outlined these at the beginning as possible outcomes against which to evaluate the process. The difference perceptions or expectations between stakeholders and researcher are not fully addressed, while they could be important determinants for the successful interaction.

5. The factor “nature of research” is only briefly touched upon though it looked “promising” in the background.

6. The Discussion section could probably be shortened and I found it confusing the way the authors seem to treat use of research in decision/policy making and translation of research into clinical practice as if they were very similar issues, while I think they are quite distinct.

To sum up I think the paper could be improved by re-positioning the results within the explorative aim of the study and by attempting a definition of process variables which, in future studies, could be linked to explicit outcomes.
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 of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.