Reviewer's report

Title: Lessons from the evaluation of the UK's NHS R&D Implementation Methods Programme

Version: 3 Date: 28 November 2006

Reviewer: Heather Buchan

Reviewer's report:

General
The manuscript is much clearer and informative following revision. Table 1 now gives a good picture of the priority areas for the Implementation Methods Program and the studies funded. It shows that research involving some priority areas of most direct relevance to policy makers, commissioners and managers was not funded. The paper should provide some comment on this aspect (there is only one brief mention in the paragraph on p11 about the overview of funded studies). The addition of further information about the interaction of the Commissioning group with researchers is very helpful but again raises more questions about whether the investment in the development of applications was reflected in successful end products. It would be helpful to have some comment on this.

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

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

The methods report that questionnaire data was returned from 30 lead applicants of the 36 projects funded. Table 2 states that it reports on all 36 projects funded. It is not clear how the data gathered on the 6 projects for which questionnaires were not returned was obtained. It is also not clear in the paper whether data from tables 3 & 4 relates to all 36 funded projects or or just the 30 on which questionnaires were completed. (The response of the applicants to points made by Reviewer 1 state that table 3 data comes from the 30 completed questionnaires.

The reference number for the paper by Coulter et al (most cited article - top of p8) is not inserted in the text.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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