Reviewer's report

Title: Investigating the complementary value of discrete choice experiments for the evaluation of barriers and facilitators in implementation research: a questionnaire survey

Version: 2 Date: 7 January 2009

Reviewer: Sherry Pagoto

Reviewer's report:

The authors have dealt with many of the reviewers’ concerns. However, a lingering concern is that it remains difficult to follow what the DCE is asking of participants. It does not necessarily seem comparable to what the traditional questionnaire offers. The authors state that the goal is to reveal how attractive it is to implement the guideline for breast cancer surgery in day care, given the circumstances described by the attributes. This seems different from having participants rate to what extent they believe that the specified requirements should be fulfilled to successfully implement change and to what extent respondents expect that the specified barriers will actually occur in their own hospitals. The former seems more focused on how well participants feel they could implement the guideline when certain barriers/facilitators are in place, while the latter assesses whether certain facilitators should be in place for the guideline to be implemented and whether certain barriers actually occur in their setting. These seem to be two slightly different sets of information. In the Discussion (page 16) the authors even point out that the questionnaire assesses perceived barriers rather than actual barriers, whereas the DCE assesses actual barriers. In making a comparison of these two types of measures it would seem important that they gather the same information. I’m not convinced that a questionnaire is not capable of assessing actual barriers and the relative importance of actual barriers. The two measures seem different to me in ways other than one being a questionnaire and one being DCE.

Even though questionnaires are a traditional measure of implementation, it remains only an assumption that the questionnaire used in the present study is highly feasibility just because it is a questionnaire. The questions could be perceived as difficult to understand. No psychometric or detailed qualitative work is reported on the development or testing of the items.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.