Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors influencing success in quality improvement collaboratives: development and psychometric testing of an instrument

Authors:
Loes M.T. Schouten (l.schouten@cbo.nl)
Richard P.T.M. Grol (r.grol@iq.umcn.nl)
Marlies E.J.L. Hulscher (m.hulscher@iq.umcn.nl)

Version: 4 Date: 18 August 2010

Author's response to reviews:

Dr. Anne Sales
Implementation Science
August 17, 2010
REVISED MANUSCRIPT: 6852859243417784

Dear dr. Sales,

Please find resubmitted our revised manuscript ‘Factors influencing success in quality improvement collaboratives: development and psychometric testing of an instrument’. Based on the comments in your e-mail we have made the revisions in our manuscript. This covering letter provides, point by point, our replies to the comments and explains how we have dealt with them in our manuscript. We would be very pleased with and are looking forward to a final decision on accepting our revised paper for publication.

Yours sincerely,
Loes Schouten & Richard Grol
IQ Healthcare, Scientific Institute for Quality in Healthcare
Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Centre

Point by point response on comments:

1. The fact that you used principal components analysis for the exploratory factor analysis should be mentioned in the Methods section, not just in the results table.

AU: we added this in our Method section (see first sentence under heading ‘construct validity testing’)

2. Although your points about the prior instruments in the response to reviewers’ comments are reasonable, the text in the revision describing these in the Discussion section is still a bit too terse. You mention differences between your instrument and the three prior ones, but you only describe what your instrument
offers, not what theirs do. I would appreciate it if you could assemble a table to include in the paper with a brief discussion that outlines key features of the prior instruments and yours, to allow readers to assess for themselves what additional value your instrument offers. I don’t think this needs to be very extensive, but you should be able to describe the major scales within each instrument briefly and then in the text describe how your instrument addresses previous holes. Given that this is the main purpose of your paper, this is an important point.

AU: In response to this point we contacted two of the authors (Mills and Neily) to inform us about the details of their survey. As their papers did not give us enough information about (the major scales used in) their questionnaires. We then added a table describing the major scales within each of the three instruments (Mills/Neily; Duckers; Schouten) and included a more detailed description of the additional items included in our instrument (specific items addressing previous holes).

3. I think that you’ve done a good job of revising the description of the current status of your instrument as undergoing initial validation, but I think you may need to emphasize this point slightly more in the final discussion section. I think it would be good to ensure that readers understand the fact that this is a new instrument in the first stages of development and validation.

AU: In the final discussion section we included the sentence that this new instrument is in the first stages of development and validation. In addition we changed the final sentence in the final discussion emphasizing that further research to refine the instrument is needed.