Reviewer’s report

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

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Reviewer: Mireille Van den Berg

Reviewer’s report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors new and well defined?
I share the view of the authors that there is currently a lack of information on which factors contribute to the success of Quality improvement collaborative’s (QIC’s). There is great need for a checklist that guides initiators in starting up a QIC based upon experience from earlier successful QIC’s.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to replicate the work?

Major Compulsory Revision: Literature search
The authors refer to an earlier paper for their searching strategy. I would like to have more information on the strategy they used (search terms, databases inclusion and exclusion criteria) in the method section of this paper. It would give me more insight in the type of papers the authors reviewed. The author identified five papers that met their inclusion criteria, but what are they? Furthermore it seems a rather small number of studies to base a 50-item instrument on. This can also be concluded from the Cronbach’s alpha of 0.86 and 0.92, which is rather high for internal consistency, suggesting that some items are overlapping and therefore redundant.

Major Compulsory Revision: Selection of items
How many items came originally from the review and how many were deleted after each selection by the author and by the expert panel

Major Compulsory Revision: The instrument
The authors state that the proposed instrument can be used prospectively as a checklist to guide initiators, facilitators, and participants of QICs with information about how to carry out or participate in a collaborative with theoretically optimal chances of success. The result looks to me more like a questionnaire for judging the collaborative retrospective. Rephrasing all questions into a checklist requires the same steps for testing construct validity and internal consistency. The result from this study does not provide us with a checklist to guide initiators yet.

3. Are the data sound and well controlled?
The authors give to little information on the search strategies and the selection of the items following. It is therefore not possible to comment on the quality of these
actions. The analysis of construct validity and internal consistency seems solid.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?  
   Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?  
   Major Compulsory Revision: The initial purpose of the instrument to be used prospectively as a checklist to guide initiators of QICs with information about how to carry out or participate in a collaborative, seems to get a bit lost in the discussion and conclusion of this paper. It is not clear at what point of the process of working in a QIC this instrument can be used and the authors give no directions on how to apply it.

6. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?  
   Yes

7. Is the writing acceptable?  
   Yes

**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