Reviewer's report

**Title:** Core competencies in the science and practice of knowledge translation: mandate for a Canadian strategic training initiative

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 1 July 2011

**Reviewer:** Jane Young

**Reviewer's report:**

There is a worldwide need to build capacity in implementation research and practice but little information or experience about how to do this effectively. This article describes a national initiative in Canada that is probably a world-leader - certainly I do not know of other similar programs elsewhere. Therefore, this article will be of great interest to academics, educators and policy makers as it provides a model that could inform local initiatives. The article is clearly written, describes the theoretical basis for the program and touches on evaluation.

Major compulsory revisions:
None

Minor essential revisions:
None

Discretionary revisions:

The thinking behind the statement that the Knowledge to Action loop may be less helpful as a framework for policy makers than other groups could be explained. (middle page 6)

How trainees are matched with mentors, how mentors are identified, and the feasibility (in terms of adequate numbers of engaged mentors) and sustainability of this aspect of the program could be discussed in more detail, but may be beyond the scope of the present paper.

Although the article outlines some aspects of evaluation of this program, these seem to focus on quantifying throughput (numbers of trainees and researchers) and academic output. Is there any thought to a bigger picture evaluation - eg looking at number of discoveries/funded grants that have evidence of implementation in X years. The question whether, as a result of this national program, the quality of health care in Canada can be improved is the key question, but very difficult to assess. Are there any plans for this type of evaluation? Also, are there any plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the different components of the program (eg courses, online education, mentoring) to try to tease out which individual components or combinations are most effective, particularly for the Stream 1 where there are a large number of strategies)?

What are the costs of the strategies/programs and how are these met? Do the
authors think that the funding model is sustainable?

**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:**

Jeremy Grimshaw has provided academic references for me. I have no other competing interests.