Reviewer's report

Title: Organisational development, sustainability, and diffusion of innovations within hospitals participating in a multilevel quality collaborative

Version: 2 Date: 7 April 2010

Reviewer: Oliver O. Groene

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to read this interesting manuscript. Overall I consider the paper relevant and well written and would recommend publication. However, before acceptance the following issues should be addressed.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The paper addresses two objectives, the first one being examined using qualitative methods, the second one being addressed quantitatively. The study questions and methods are appropriate; however, the overall presentation of the manuscript is not well balanced. The introduction and methods take too many words before getting to the results section. Although the length of the manuscript is not a cost-issue in an online journal, manuscripts should follow the same standards in terms of conciseness as manuscripts submitted to print journals.

2. Methods: a range of data sources is used (interviews, questionnaire, central database). The questionnaire that is mentioned here should be described in more detail and referenced.

3. Analysis: "Interviews provide the narrative data surrounding the questionnaires" - this statement should be expanded and explained in the methods section.

4. Results: the use of log-transformed and non-transformed data is confusing. Data should be referred to as it appears in the table.

5. Parts of the text read at times long-winded and should be shortened, tightened up and expressed more concisely.

6. The section on page 5 "The typical team ...." reads a bit mechanical. The readability of the section on the work of different teams might be improved using bulleted points.

7. The presentation of qualitative results should be improved and presented more clearly according to themes emerging from the analysis. The figure presented here does not seem to be a direct result of the interviews and might better be referred to in the discussion section.

8. The discussion sections refers to the lack of control group to control for other factors that affected outcomes. Could the multi-level analysis account for some
additional factors to improve robustness of the analysis?

**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.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.