Reviewer's report

Title: The Role of organizational context and individual nurse characteristics in explaining variation in use of information technologies in evidence based practice

Version: 1 Date: 16 April 2012

Reviewer: Alan Thomas

Reviewer's report:

Minor issues not for publication
In Abstracts, Results first sentence refers to Table PC rather than Tablet PC. Also in the Methods section the same ‘Table for Tablet’ error is repeated in Data Collection Tools section in the fourth sentence. Also in Results, paragraph three, in sentence two, and also sentence three has the Table for Tablet error. Also in Discussion section, Organization Context, in discussion about the negative relation to staff slack time, (or Table PC) is used rather than Tablet PC (sentence eight).

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting study whose purpose is to identify the role of organisational context and nurse characteristics in explaining variations in use of mobile computers to access evidence-based information. It is a follow up to a 2010 evaluation of the Canadian initiative to fund the use of mobile computers by front line nurses. It uses self-reporting to data collection with no observation or database logging system to verify reported findings.

The research questions are new and well defined. The findings from the study are interesting and provoke further questions.

Discretionary Revision:

It would be useful to know what devices were used in the study, such as the types of PDA, Smartphone, Tablet PC (notebooks, laptops or true tablet PCs or iPads?). Was the different device and network performance taken into account? The authors state that the Tablet PC’s were shared, but do not give any ratios to assess how easily a nurse could access the PC. If such data were available it would be useful. Do they have any data on how much of a barrier sharing the
Tablet PC was?

How was the reference material given to the nurses? Was the drug and medical books installed onto the devices or accessed on line? It would possibly have implications for speed of access and thus frequency of use.

Also consider including discussions of similar findings of other studies such as the UK study into Organisational influences on nurses use of clinical decision support systems, by Randell & Dowding (Int. J. of Medical Informatics 79 (2010) 412-421

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.

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