Reviewer's report

Title: Fidelity and moderating factors in complex interventions: A case study of a continuum of care program for frail elderly people in health and social care

Version: 1 Date: 4 September 2011

Reviewer: Christopher Carroll

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions:
None

Minor compulsory revisions:
The MRC document on complex interventions [citation 4] has been updated:

Discretionary revisions:
p.11 "Fidelity of each intervention component" not "components"
p.13 "older people with dementia" not "demented older people"

As an evaluation of the practical challenges of measuring implementation fidelity, this is exemplarly. It has several major findings:
- the conceptual framework is robust and a useful tool
- the evaluation of implementation fidelity is extremely problematic (even for a methodologically sound, high quality study such as this)
- factors exercising a moderating effect can change over time (one of the factors this study adds to the existing framework)
- direction of future research: the same evaluation needs to be completed in control groups in appropriate studies and in a non-research context

This article provides a solid validation of the model framework, and illuminates its strengths and limitations with good quality empirical research. More studies like this are needed to test the framework further.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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