Reviewer's report

**Title:** Managing Boundaries in Primary Care Service Improvement: A Developmental Approach to Communities of Practice

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 9 June 2012

**Reviewer:** Linda Li

**Reviewer's report:**

The goal of this study was to explore the effects of intra-organisational and inter-organisational boundaries on the implementation of a service improvement intervention within and across primary healthcare settings, and on the development of communities of practice (CoPs) across professions and across organisations. This well-planned, well-executed study provides new insight into the implementation of these types of interventions, although less on how to foster the growth of a CoP.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached):

I have no major concern with this paper. My only recommendation would be to clarify why the four general practices were considered as CoPs. One challenge in the health care literature is the obscurity of what is (or is not) a CoP. From the description, I was unclear if all multi-professional general practices were CoPs. If not, it would be helpful to clarify the criteria used to identify the four general practice CoPs in this study.

I have enjoyed reviewing this article; however, I was somewhat frustrated by the main finding that successful service improvement intervention was dependent on having a cohesive multi-professional team to begin with. This is rather intuitive and is not new in the service improvement field. Perhaps, it would be helpful to highlight more of the new insights gained on how to implement and evaluate these type of interventions in the future. This topic was only discussed at the very end of the manuscript.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct):

None

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore):

The description of this article is very rich. It may clarify for the readers if a diagram depicting the organization of the General Practice CoPs is provided.

Level of interest:

This article will be of interest to readers of Implementation Science
Quality of written English:
Very good, although the Discussion section can be more concise.

**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