Author's response to reviews

Title: Exploring the feasibility of Conjoint Analysis as a tool for prioritising innovations for implementation

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Version: 3 Date: 22 November 2012

Author's response to reviews:

Thank you for the requested revisions to our paper “Exploring the feasibility of Conjoint Analysis as a tool for prioritising innovations for implementation”. They were useful in highlighting some omissions in the background and have been useful in developing the methods section. We have made extensive changes to the original draft and believe that in doing so we have produced a better article.

We respond to each comment individually below.

- Merging the Results and the Methods sections makes reading and understanding of the work rather hard. we strongly advise you to separate the section with clear contents within each one of them.

These sections have been amended, notably the last paragraphs of the Methods section have been moved into the Results section.

- Some of the referencing is not accurate. In fact, we felt there was some misinterpretation of reference 3, which may impact on key premise of the work reported here, i.e. that it is important that innovations fit with stakeholders' beliefs and values to maximise their uptake. Within healthcare, this is based on theory more than evidence. On the one hand, there is some evidence that the opposite can be true (eg, Foy et al, J Clin Epidemiol 2002). On the other hand, there are often systemic influences on uptake of innovations - eg, staffing issues, availability of protocols, and other organisational factors. Stakeholders’ beliefs and values are therefore important but as part of a wider web of influences - which is not acknowledged in the manuscript. Could CA be useful in separating these multiple influences - this would enhance the added value of this paper quite considerably.

We have revised the latter part of the introduction to contextualise the role of stakeholder values in the wider theoretical approach and to recognise the mixed empirical evidence around their role in adopter behaviour (paragraphs 4 and 5). We have also made reference to the wider implementation study in which this research sits (para 6) to illustrate that we explore the role of stakeholder values
as just one determinant of innovation.

- The writing feels rather clunky at times - the paper could be significantly more streamlined in the description of the background/rationale, as well as in the description of the actual method. We would suggest to the authors to have a very concise description of what the CA technique requires, potentially using a table/figure for clarity. Then to explain how they operationalised these requirements within their context. please remember the readers will not be experts in CA and hence they ought to be able to grasp the basics of the technique when reading the paper.

The Methods section has been significantly revised to streamline the description of the conjoint approach (including an additional table) and how we have operationalized it as proof of principle.