Reviewer’s report

Title: Toward systematic reviews to understand the determinants of wait time management success to help decision-makers and managers better manage wait times

Version: 4 Date: 26 February 2013

Reviewer: Christine Norton

Reviewer’s report:

1. This manuscript seems to have a focus on Canada rather than relevance to an international audience.

2. The search is done systematically but I do not see any methods for data abstraction or synthesis used.

3. The findings are a narrative but offer no synthesis of findings nor any sense of the strength of associations found, size of study or soundness of methods used to obtain data. All studies seem to be given equal weight.

4. There is no critique offered for the studies included. It seems some of the included articles are opinion pieces rather than original research.

5. Many statements are vague, for example "stakeholder involvement was a key factor", but how was this done in the studies, what methods and degree of stakeholder involvement is needed and how has this been evaluated? What is the relative weight of the multiple factors listed?

6. The workshop was 4 years ago and health care has changed since then.

7. What was the method used for the workshop that allowed the 5 main themes to emerge?

8. In the discussion it states that the workshop helped to validate the results of the review when in fact some new factors emerged according to the text. It is not clear why the quality of design and the impact on wait times were not included.

9. 47 studies does not seem to be "limited availability" of studies.

10. The Prisma checklist could not be followed as this really did not follow recognised methods for extracting, handling and reporting data in a systematic review.

11. Practical implications for health care managers need to be presented for implementation.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
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'