Reviewer's report

**Title:** Evaluation and Mechanism for Outcomes Exploration of Providing Public Health Care in Contract Service in Rural China: a Multiple-Case Study with Complex Adaptive Systems Design

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 24 December 2014

**Reviewer:** David Mant

**Reviewer's report:**

Major compulsory revisions:

1. The paper has too many language errors to be easily read and needs to be edited by someone with better English language skills before acceptance.

2. The paper needs to be better structured with better delineation of method, results and discussion.

3. The concept of a complex adaptive system is a potentially helpful framework for assessing change but it is not a method. The method was a qualitative case-study using a mixture of informant interviews and focus groups. The sampling strategy (e.g. in what sense was the choice of study centres purposive?) and analysis (how were emergent issues triangulated?) needs to better described.

4. Although the first section of the results is titled pathways and outcomes, the manuscript gives a very desultory account of public health outcomes in the study areas, consisting primarily of comments by managers on the implementation of the proposed process changes. It would be much easier to be interested in the case-study results if it was clearer what had and had not been achieved in public health terms.

Discretionary revisions

The manuscript is a potentially interesting case-study of the process of implementation of health service reform in China. However, it is too long and rambling to be read by many. It could much improved by editing to reduce the length of the text by 50%

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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 interest.