Reviewer's report

Title: Multiple perspectives on clinical decision support: a qualitative study of fifteen clinical and vendor organizations

Version: 4 Date: 30 November 2014

Reviewer: Brian Bell

Reviewer's report:

1) My focus is on quantitative methods so I do not have much knowledge of qualitative approaches. However, one thing I would like to know is how much agreement there was between the pairs of researchers that coded the transcripts. The Data Analysis section mentions that the coding was 'discussed and finalized by a team' but no mention is made of how this process was conducted or what the level of agreement was. This seems to be a major compulsory revision although I must admit that perhaps this is more of a quantitative objection rather than something that must necessarily be applied to a qualitative analysis.

2) For Table 2, it would help if some summary statistics were provided concerning the number of interviews, hours observing and so on. Also, how well did the data capture your sampling plan? I notice that one of the sites (HealthEast Care System) had a much larger number of interviews than the other sites. Did the data from this site unduly influence the conclusions that were drawn? This seems like a major compulsory revision.

3) Again my ignorance may be showing here concerning qualitative methods, but you mention that the RAP approach uses qualitative and quantitative data-gathering instruments. If this is the case, I'm not sure why more quantitative information is not presented in the article. I'm not sure what level of revision should be employed here as I don't know much about the RAP approach.

4) This gets back to the issue of sampling. Although an effort was made to include sites based on certain variables that could influence the results (such as geography) and individuals within sites were selected so as to sample different roles, the reader has no way of evaluating whether this was accomplished. Although summary statistics based on Table 2 might provide some information about the former no information about the respondents themselves is provided. This seems pretty important.

5) The ad-hoc nature of the data collection plan is of concern. Although the authors should be praised for continuing their data collection efforts, its seems things should have been planned in advance rather than 'on the fly' Perhaps the importance of subsequent questions could not be evaluated until data was collected from the earlier phases?

6) This is not a criticism but more of a supportive note. I think the topic is of
interest and qualitative approaches can often get at things which a quantitative approach might miss or be unsuitable for.

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

**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.