Reviewer’s report

Title: A qualitative exploration of the discharge process and factors predisposing to readmissions to the intensive care unit

Version: 1 Date: 11 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Edward Bittner

Reviewer's report:

I read with interest the study Ofoma et al which performs a qualitative exploration of factors affecting ICU readmission. The manuscript is well written, employs well founded qualitative methods and provides some novel insight into non-patient related factors that impact the readmission process. I only have a few questions/comments which might be addressed to further enhance this manuscript

1) Page 4, Line 24-26. Data saturation was the primary determinant of how many interviews were conducted; data collection stopped when no new information was gathered for each of the main themes. Since data was necessary for generation of the main themes this iterative process may be confusing to readers unfamiliar with qualitative methodology. Please elaborate on the methodological approach.

2) Page 3, Line 18. The study by Russell et al used patient interviews to identify readmission themes. Was there a reason that patients were not included in this analysis?

3) Were there differences in themes identified between different caregiver types, (e.g RN vs MD), experience levels or the different ICUs studied? These differences might be useful for identifying targets for process improvement.

4) While the manuscript provides some general "implications" of the study it would be useful to further elaborate on how the findings could be made "actionable." This would be particularly helpful for others studying their own ICU discharge/readmission processes for quality improvement.

5) There are a few grammatical errors that need correction- e.g Page 4 line 17 "explored", Page 4, line 40 "bests"

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Does the work include the necessary controls?  
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?  
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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