Reviewer’s report

Title: South African Primary Health Care Allied Health Clinical Practice Guidelines: The big picture

Version: 0  Date: 08 Nov 2016

Reviewer: Neil Drummond

Reviewer’s report:

This is a beautifully written report of a very well-done qualitative study designed to understand the current condition of clinical practice guideline development and implementation for allied health services in primary care settings in South Africa. The sampling was particularly well done in order to achieve an appropriately heterogeneous set of interviewees from relevant contexts. The use of SNA to attempt to understand the sample characteristics is fairly novel as far as I know, though given the snowball sampling process adopted the fact that all expected nodes were present and linked with no outliers sounds at risk of tautologous and doesn't seem to me to really validate the sample at all. The presentation of the data was clear and the discussion was reasonable in the context of the data.

My only real criticism of this paper is whether it meets a general requirement of making an original contribution to knowledge. To which I think the answer is in South Africa probably "yes" but in the rest of the developed world "probably not". The use of SNA isn't described in anything like enough detail for it to make a strong methodological contribution in its own right. Which rather leads me to the conclusion that this is a very good and important policy-relevant paper but for a South African audience, specifically.

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.

Unable to assess

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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