Reviewer's report

Title: Plan, Recruit, Retain: A Framework for Local Health Care Organizations to Achieve a Stable Remote Rural Workforce

Version: 0 Date: 22 Jun 2020

Reviewer: Doug Blackie

Reviewer's report:

This is a well-written, evidence-based and important article for organizations and individuals supporting rural health planning, recruitment and retention. The proposed Framework is supported by the relevant literature, real-work experimentation and provides a comprehensive set of actions/considerations. It is highly applicable to a wide variety of contexts. I appreciated the humble tone of the writing specifically around the exploration of different factors and the iterative process undertaken by the partners.

I would like to offer the following points of feedback and encourage the authors whether there's an opportunity to:

- Briefly expand on the process undertaken to derive and validate the elements of the framework through the case study review. What specific structured processes, for example were utilized to surface key findings and validate the elements of the framework?
- Cite the World Health Organization's social accountability model to support your reference on page 10 to 'socially accountable' organizations and the potential value of incorporating the stakeholders in the WHO framework to the planning, recruitment and retention processes?
- Describe the potential role for leadership - formal or informal- to drive any of these processes? Was the role of leadership assessed in the case studies in terms of being able to sustain energy and focus during the different plan/recruitment/retention elements?
- Define a "desirable workplace" beyond what is set out in the draft paper? For example, is this an opportunity to discuss workplace health/culture and the role of leadership to support that?
- Consider the literature on the changing expectations of health care professionals and the impact - if any- on the framework? There has been some recent work in Canada on generational expectations with increasing numbers of Millennial generation health care workers entering the system who may have different expectations that the Gen X/Boomers they are replacing. May I suggest: Snadden, D., & Kunzli, M. A. (2017). Working hard by working differently: a qualitative study of the impact of generational change on rural health care. CMAJ Open, 5(3).

As noted, this is an important framework and support publication of this article.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:
An article of importance in its field

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

Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests**
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal.

**Publons Reviewer Recognition**. Springer Nature can send verification of this review directly to Publons (a subsidiary of Clarivate Analytics). If you would like to take advantage of this service, please click on the “Yes” option below. Your name, email address, title of the reviewed manuscript, name of the journal, and date of your review submission (the “Review Data”) will
then be transmitted to Publons upon publication of the manuscript. If you have already registered at Publons, they will notify you of the receipt of this review and update your profile as per your settings and their policy. If you are not registered with Publons, you will receive an email from them asking you to register in order for them to be able to recognize your review on your new profile page. Publons may use the Review Data to generate derivative metadata for the benefit of Publons and you as a reviewer, carefully considering the sensitivity of such information. For example, Publons may verify your record as a reviewer by updating your profile published on its webservice if you have registered for such service or help editors to identify candidate reviewers. Please find the details of processing in Publons’ privacy policy https://publons.com/about/terms

Yes