Reviewer's report

Title: Program theory development and formative evaluation of a provincial knowledge translation unit

Version: 0 Date: 03 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Arja R. Aro

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript is very well written and formulated. The manuscript is based on a relatively small sample; however, due to its specificity and well described context, it is informative and an important addition to the KT literature. Overall, the manuscript remains rather abstract for those outside the academic field of KT. For example, program theory development, capacity, 4C model etc would need some more explanation as concepts.

The discussion and conclusion give the impression that practitioners should learn to synthesize and appraise research evidence. Is this realistic? These activities are rather demanding academic tasks and the co-creation of best practices etc might better succeed if academic text are re-written (by brokers? etc) into more practical tools. At least for strong arguments on what practitioners (or researchers/brokers) should do, some empirical research evidence would be needed to support the arguments.

The discussion part does compare own results with some other studies in Canada, though one would expect somewhat wider discussion in the light of the international literature. Canada has created a very supportive environment and has proved rather ample funding for KT; is Canada a special case in this field? Naturally this mostly qualitative small scale study is not meant directly to provide generalizations. However, the readers of the journal come from around the world.

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