Reviewer's report

Title: How pragmatic is it? Lessons learned using PRECIS and RE-AIM criteria for determining pragmatic characteristics of research

Version: 2
Date: 12 March 2014

Reviewer: Laura Damschroder

Reviewer's report:

This paper is improved and most of my comments on the first draft have been addressed. A few exceptions and additional suggestions are listed below.

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS

1. It is not clear whether Table 1 lists “descriptions” that are a summary from the published articles describing PRECIS and RE-AIM or whether these descriptions include additional guidance based on the authors’ experiences applying them to the three studies.

2. This seems picky, but clarity would be significantly improved if when referring to RE-AIM and PRECIS, decide and use terms consistently throughout:
   a. RE-AIM and PRECIS are tools, frameworks, sets of domains/criteria?
   b. RE-AIM and PRECIS each describe a series of *domains* (?) by which…
   c. …*criteria* (?) are applied to assign scores/ratings that indicate how pragmatic a study is
   d. (authors now refer to criteria or sets of criteria or domains inconsistently; Table 1 column headers may need to be revised based on terms decided on; e.g., Domains and Criteria for the last 2 columns)

3. The paper loses vividness without a presentation of actual ratings so readers can see the range of ratings and how they may vary across studies and across domains. This is especially important for reader who are reading about PRECIS or RE-AIM for the first time. Consider adding in a version of the old Table 3 from the original paper, but that combines RE-AIM and PRECIS domains and scores. I would suggest limiting the RE-AIM domains to the Reach, effectiveness, adoption, implementation, maintenance with the addition of cost (this addition is a finding that should be highlighted as a lesson?)

4. An explanation of how to apply ratings (rather than just quantitative measures of e.g., Reach) and what scale is used is still missing for RE-AIM though much detail is provided for PRECIS.

MINOR REVISIONS

1. Consider reworking Tables 2 and 3. It would be helpful to move the last 2 (or even the last 3) columns from Table 2 to Table 3. To accommodate the extra columns in Table 3, any or all of the first four columns from Table 3 can be moved to Table 2. This new arrangement would align “lessons learned” and
criteria modifications altogether.
2. Thank you for providing the URL for the Wells, et al (2009) article but it links to a page with a message: “The requested article is not currently available on this site”
3. One question that I wonder if the authors can reflect upon: are ratings comparable across studies? Is it meaningful that one study has e.g., lower ratings on a domain than another? Or should ratings only be compared across domains within the same study?

**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