Reviewer's report

Title: Sustainability of Evidence-Based Healthcare: Conceptual and Methodological Agenda

Version: 1 Date: 24 March 2015

Reviewer: Sarah M Horwitz

Reviewer's report:

“Sustainability of Evidence-Based Healthcare: Conceptual and Methodological Agenda,” by Procter et al., is a multi-method, multi-phased approach to the development of recommendations for research, methodological advances and infrastructure development to advance the understanding of sustainability of evidence-based practices in healthcare. The title and abstract of this manuscript accurately convey the contents of the manuscript and the methods (concept mapping) were well described and appropriate. The manuscript goes far beyond the usual approach to agenda setting, often some form of a systematic review, and, therefore, makes a substantial contribution to the extant literature.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The introduction was well written and well argued but would benefit from a sentence or two on the factors related to sustainability in the sparse available literature.
2. The introduction generally addresses healthcare broadly, but occasionally uses the term mental healthcare. It might be better to consistently use healthcare.
3. The selection of the 65 out of 94 experts identified in Phase 1 invited to the sorting and ranking task was not adequately described and neither was the process for selecting the 35 invited to the conference.
4. There is no limitations sections yet the participation rates for brainstorming (50/94- 53%), sorting (19/65- 29%), importance ranking (18/65- 28%) and challenge ranking (13/65- 20%) are all suboptimal. This should be acknowledged and the implications for the findings should be discussed.
5. The conclusion section is repetitive. The authors should consider deleting the description of the project purpose and methods.

Minor Comments not for publication:

1. I saw a few small typos in the manuscript.
2. Table 3 added no new information. The authors should consider deleting it.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests: None