Reviewer's report

Title: Identifying priorities in knowledge translation from the perspective of trainees: Results from an online survey

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Reviewer: Justin Presseau

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Taking stock of the views of the next generation of implementation science / KT researchers and practitioners is important and helpful for assessing how such views match with the current directions within the field. Given the nature of their training, trainees are well-positioned to be developing an in depth understanding of current issues in the field, and therefore can offer unique insight. While I read this short report with interest, I have a few concerns, listed below.

Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

• More should be done to justify to the reader why this research is important. The statement in the abstract that “Since many KT trainees are developing their research programs, understanding their concerns and KT research and practice priorities is critical to supporting the development and advancement of KT as a field” feels like a bit of a non sequitur – it would help to clarify how understanding priorities will support development and advancement of KT as a field; this is not immediately clear.

• It is not clear how the authors defined ‘priorities’ as a general concept in this manuscript and to the participants. It seems that the views elicited were more concerned with which areas of KT are ‘important’, rather than ‘priorities’ per se. Both are related constructs, but priority implies an element of urgency that importance does not. Priority also implies that other aspects not listed are ‘less of a priority’- it is a more relative construct than ‘importance’. It would help to provide a clear definition of priority, or else to change the term to ‘key’ or ‘important’ areas research and practice in KT. I am not convinced that pitching this in terms of ‘priorities’ is quite the right tone of the argument. Indeed, some of the themes themselves described in terms of ‘importance’.

• The ‘purpose and methods’ section suggests that frequency counts and descriptive stats of closed questions were assessed, however these do not seem to appear in the results. What was the nature of these questions and why were they not presented? Perhaps this refers to the demographic participant details?

• If participants were sampled from the 2013 KT Canada Summer Institute, to what extent do the themes that emerged reflect the content of that summer school and how soon after any summer school was this questionnaire sent? Are the respondents describing topics that were raised at the summer school itself? If
so, it would be worth clarifying this in the discussion as it has implications for the independence of the claimed importance of the views expressed. My worry at this point is that the themes are more a reflection of the topics raised at the summer school, which may not be the case, but this is not yet clear.

- The conclusion states that the findings align with the existing literature; there is therefore an inevitable question of what is the novel contribution to the literature? Besides using an empirical process, what else sets this research apart? A statement about the breadth of the represented views might help strengthen the point made. Were there any key areas in the field that were not mentioned by trainees as being important, yet are reflected in the extent literature? For instance, de-implementation is increasingly seen as a key area of focus in the field. There may be areas as well. A few additional sentences in the conclusion could highlight these issues and discuss reasons why they may not have been flagged by trainees.

- A clear strength of this manuscript is that it may serve as a signpost to new trainees getting into the field. That said, while it is important to flag what trainees currently feel are important areas in implementation science, the field is moving rapidly and I would like to see a more inclusive message in the conclusion. It is helpful to highlight the 7 issues, but it would also be helpful to encourage trainees to think creatively and to contribute to pushing the field forward by not only considering the 7 issues listed, but also to think beyond these key issues towards what the next set of issues might be. In other words, a bit of a more open conclusion would provide for a more inclusive message while maintaining the point of focusing on the 7 issues flagged.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

- Given the international audience of the journal, clarify the country alongside provinces (e.g. in abstract)
- P4: ‘and so on’: please clarify
- Please clarify whether any of the authors were also respondents.
- Any details about non-responders? How representative are the responders to the full sample? Any other details about the respondents (such as their academic/training background)? This would help to better contextualise the assessment of the importance of various topics.
- Were any agreement statistics computed between coders?

Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

- I wonder whether the authors might want to further categorise their identified topics into over-arching topics?
- “Expand our ‘ways of inquiry’” could be better described as “Expand our methodological approaches”? 
Figure and themes: consider using more consistent language between themes ("Determining" vs "determine")

KT is a Canadian term – given the international audience, it may be worthwhile situating the term

**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