**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Understanding Professional Advice Networks in Long-Term Care: An Outside-Inside View of Best Practice Pathways for Diffusion

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 10 Sep 2018

**Reviewer:** Margaret Padek

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Reviewer Comments for Implementation Science IMPS-D-18-00498

"Understanding Professional Advice Networks in Long-term Care: an Outside-Inside View of Best Practice Pathways for Diffusion."

This very interesting study will have relevance to many other fields for a better understanding of network roles and the dissemination of best practices. I think the authors have done an excellent job addressing previous reviewer responses and has helped clarify the purpose of this study and its outcome. There are a few more points to be clarified to help the readers better understand the methods, specifically the processes used to classify the "Advice seeking relationships"

1) Lines 75-76- "Because advice seekers had to have a least one outgoing tie, all were survey respondents." This phrasing is confusing. Do the authors mean that all survey respondents were considered Advice Seekers because they had at least one outgoing tie?

2) Types of Advice Seeking Relationships. Lines 175-186

The authors note that there are four types of advice seeking relationships; however, I am having trouble parsing out how "reciprocal" differs from the other classifications particularly "peer-peer". In addition, "formal" and "mentoring" appear the same to me as they both note they were more structured relationships with those who were senior to them. It also seems that "reciprocal" is classifying more the flow of information rather than the power structure in the relationship. Could the authors define these relationships more clearly?

The authors note in lines 187-190 & 212-214 that relationships could be classified as two different types. Did the research team account for this in the coding of the relationships? In addition, how did the research team account for relationships that changed and evolved (per line 331)? Were these relationships double coded or was the coding based on the origination of the relationship?

Figure 3 does not add to my understanding of Advice Seeking Relationships. Especially since "Reciprocal" is listed in both Types and Evolution. I think the manuscript can do without this
figure since the manuscript already a little figure-heavy and these concepts are described in the body of the text.

3) While the focus of the manuscript is Advice Networks and network information dissemination, the authors do not touch a lot on the type of information that is being dissemination other than "promising practices." A key element of implementation science research and practice is that proven practices or evidence-based practices are the ones promoted in clinical and routine practice. Perhaps it would be opportune to add a line in the Implications for Research or Limitations section on how "promising practices" aligns with evidence-based practices? I think this would really help tie this study's relevance to implementation science.

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