Reviewer's report

Title: Clinical performance comparators in audit and feedback: a review of theory and evidence

Version: 0 Date: 27 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Bernadette Brown

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to read this interesting review of current and best practices in the choice of performance comparator in audit and feedback interventions - a pertinent topic given the plethora, and variable effectiveness, of audit and feedback interventions in the implementation science literature. Based on your review of more than 140 trials, 12 behavioural theories, 5 RCTs and 42 qualitative A&F studies, the review summarises different categories of performance comparators, and identifies the mechanism of their potential effectiveness mapped to behavioural theory. You have provided practical advice to improve the design of performance comparators in A&F interventions. Importantly, you conclude that best practice in A&F requires tailoring of comparators to the issue and audience at hand and highlights an ongoing requirement for needs assessment rather than the possibility to prescribe a one size fits all approach to A&F design. You also conclude A&F interventions should limit the amount of comparators being displayed while offering the opportunity to access more detail if required; provide performance trends but not trends alone; and encourage feedback recipients to set personal, explicit targets guided by relevant information. It would be interesting to include examples from the literature of where these principles of good comparator design have been followed and whether these studies effected greater change. You note the need to undertake further head-to-head trials comparing different types of comparators to test their effectiveness and this would be a valuable addition to the literature.

This is a clearly written and informative article, however, there are a number of typos throughout that need correction prior to publication.

Level of interest
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An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published
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