Reviewer’s report

Title: Understanding the influences on successful quality improvement in emergency general surgery: learning from the RCS Chole-QuIC project

Version: 0 Date: 04 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Euan Sadler

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for asking me to review this interesting paper. It is well written, but I have the following suggestions for the authors to address to improve the paper before accepting for publication.

Abstract

Overall this is clear. In the methods 'ethnographic observation' should be plural. In terms of NPT it would be clearer that the authors rephrase that 'NPT informed the data collection and analysis of the study' or something similar.

Introduction

Overall clearly written

Methods

In the section 'The Chole-QuIC intervention' the authors would need to provide a concise description of the intervention here in the text to aid clarity.

In the data collection section, ethnographic observations should be plural (page 7, line 13), and could the authors please discuss what this involved? Do they mean participant observations?

In the data analysis section:

Please could the authors first spell out here what was the 'main outcome measure for the collaborative' (page 7, line 49).
Page 7, second paragraph, the authors would need to define and justify in the text the use of constructs from NPT rather than only placing these constructs in Table 1, particularly because the different constructs use quite technical language.

Page 7, line 58- do the authors mean here 'inductive' rather than deductive approach?

Results

Overall the findings are well presented but there would need to be more discussion throughout how the themes and related subthemes relate/can be understood through the constructs of NPT, so that the results are theoretically informed rather than only described. Currently NPT constructs are only discussed on page 15 under the theme 'Creation of additional capacity for emergency cholecystectomies.' This is a key limitation of how the results are currently discussed.

Other specific points:

Page 9, line 60, when the authors discuss 'size of teams ranging from one to six' it would be clearer to add 'participants' or 'staff' after this.

Page 9, lines 60, please rephrase more clearly the sentence 'site visits were the activity with the poorest uptake'.

Page 10 when the authors present data extracts from 'ethnographic notes' what is meant by 'ethnographic notes'? Do they mean field notes of participant observations?

Page 13, lines 52-3 under the theme 'Turning ideas into action' can the authors define what the 'Model for Improvement approach' entails.

Discussion

Page 17, lines 11-21 this is a very long sentence- it would be better that the authors could make this into a couple of sentences.

Page 18, second paragraph, here the authors discuss their results in line with NPT constructs, but these need to be defined first earlier in the paper in the methods section.

Overall in the discussion, there is currently limited discussion of interpretation of the findings through the lens of the constructs of NPT.
Page 18, lines 51-2, when the authors discuss that they would do more than skills training and coaching if they were to conduct this collaborative again, but could they spell out what specifically?

Conclusion

This is largely fine but quite brief as it currently stands.

Level of interest

Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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