Reviewer’s report

Title: Identifying relevant concepts and factors for the sustainability of evidence-based practices within acute care contexts: A systematic review and theory analysis of selected sustainability frameworks.

Version: 0 Date: 20 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Rachel Tabak

Reviewer's report:

This paper describes a review of frameworks, models, and theories (F/M/T) to guide sustainability, particularly in healthcare. While this could be a nice contribution, the paper would benefit from a clear definition of and justification for the objective. Further, the addition of methodological details, which articulate what is included and excluded from the review and why, could help explain how the methods addresses the stated objective. Specific notes follow.

* It might help to clarify what this paper adds beyond the Moore et al 2017 (ref #7) and the Lennox et al. 2018 (ref #8) reviews (e.g., why are models designed for general healthcare settings inadequate for acute care?), particularly given "identify existing F/M/Ts recommended for use within acute care settings or unspecified healthcare organization/setting" is in the aims for the current review. It might help to bring more of the responses to the editor comments (e.g., "The authors signal that they are going to focus on theories, models, and frameworks that pertain to acute care, yet they include theories, models, and frameworks that pertain to healthcare settings generally.") into the manuscript, so this distinction and individual contribution and the justification for including "unspecified healthcare organizational/clinical setting" are clear.

* It seems a key way this review contributes to the literature is use of a "modified theory analysis approach". Describing or introducing this in the introduction could help readers see the gap being addressed by this review.

* Why restrict to models specific to sustainability? What about models that encompass more phases, but include sustainability (e.g., RE-AIM, EPIS). This might avoid bogging studies down with too many F/M/Ts. That being said, looking at the exclusion criteria section and Table 1, a model which includes additional phases would not need to be excluded, as long as it explicitly addressed sustainability. This may just be a matter of clarifying this inclusivity. However, in looking at Figure 1 and Appendix 3, a 113 exclusions for "Implementation and sustainability or implementation model"; does this mean a F/M/T that was inclusive of both implementation and sustainability would be excluded? While this comes up in the response to editor comments, clarification and justification do not seem to be included in the manuscript.

* It is not clear from the methods what type of papers were searched for. If the manuscript relies so heavily on the references in the reviews cited as #’s 7 and 8, some summary of the methods in those reviews is needed. It is not possible to tell from the current paper if any citation of a F/M/T would be included, only a F/M/F development paper, or some other method.

* Additional clarification in the methods could be helpful, particularly as it relates to inclusion. It is not clear if a model that was designed in one setting (e.g., community), but has been used and tested in another setting might become eligible. If not, a justification for why only
an index description of a model would be included, rather than application of a model developed for public health but applied to acute care settings, would be helpful.

* It is interesting to see the comparison with the More et al review at the top of page 9 (lines 223-225) included in the results section, rather than the discussion. Typically the results section would include the findings of the current paper, with the discussion section comparing these with other studies in the literature. Might the authors present a justification for the alternate presentation in this review?

* The section on Schematics is a nice addition to the results.

* This paper could use a round of proofreading, as there are grammatical errors that are a bit distracting

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