

Author's response to reviews

Title: What can management theories offer evidence-based practice? A comparative analysis of measurement tools for organisational context

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Reply to reviewers comments

Reviewer 1

1. The reviewer required a more detailed review of the problem of knowledge sharing, and a defence of measure and manage approaches.

We wish to thank the reviewer for helpful direction. We acknowledge that the previous background was rather limited and may not have done justice to the overall source literatures. We have re-written the literature review to include a more detailed review of the problems of knowledge use in healthcare, the potential strengths and weaknesses of current approaches to understanding knowledge management and organisational learning, and how these might apply in healthcare. In particular, we have restated our intention to measure the organisational conditions to support knowledge processes, rather than the actual practices themselves.

This work was driven by a desire to improve the conceptual basis of an institutional audit we were commissioned to conduct in practice, together with a recognition of the overly technical-rational stance of existing tools to measure organisational context. We have acknowledged and defended our admittedly pragmatic stance in relation to measurement and the use of existing tools as sources; stressed the exploratory and developmental nature of the work; and the further work that would be required for validity and reliability to be established.

Reviewer 2

2. The reviewer required an updated literature, clear definitions knowledge management and organisational learning, and explanation of our use of the concepts of absorptive and receptive capacity. as structuring devices. The reviewer also required some acknowledgement of the weaknesses of

measurement tools and more emphasis on research approaches from a practice-based perspective.

We wish to thank the reviewer for helpful comments, particularly in relation to the relationships between the different fields. We have completely re-written the literature review to reflect the most recent literature, and have included clear definitions of, and relationships between organisational learning and knowledge management, and the concepts of absorptive and receptive capacity.

We have also stressed the specific requirements for managing knowledge and learning in healthcare, and focussed on the potential strengths and the weaknesses of practice-based approaches. We have made clearer our own admittedly pragmatic stance in attempting a practical solution which can encompass the multiple perspectives on knowledge that are active in healthcare, including both the technical and human aspects. Having made our stance clearer, we have also strengthened the discussion of the weaknesses of our approach, particularly in terms of perpetuating the inherent biases of existing tools.

The file format has also been revised to conform to the required journal style, by moving the tables and list of figures, and revising the layout of Table 4.