

## **Reviewer's report**

**Title:** Healthcare professionals and managers' participation in developing an intervention : A pre-intervention study in the elderly care context

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 14 October 2008

**Reviewer:** Richard Baker

### **Reviewer's report:**

#### Overview

This is a clearly written article that describes a carefully conducted study. It would be a useful addition to the literature on intervention development but needs some revision to bring out important issues, including a description of how tailoring took place.

#### Major compulsory

1. How were the observation and documentation data used in the analysis? This is not described (page 9).
2. The results section seems to present findings from both the interviews and focus groups combined, although these steps in the study took place sequentially (see the Figure). Perhaps I have misunderstood the results section, but attention should be given to clarifying this section.
3. The way in which the data from the interviews were used in designing the intervention is not clearly described. The intervention seems to have arisen from the preferences of the participants, although in the discussion it is said that 'the results of the study helped the researchers design a new intervention' (page 18). Could more be said about exactly what happened in the meetings that planned the intervention? What steps were taken in the process to select intervention elements that were most likely to be effective, rather than merely those which would be least disruptive to the participants? For example, changing the funding mechanisms might (perhaps) have been highly effective, but rejected by the participants as too disturbing. They may have preferred the status quo. Some ideas on the tailoring process can be obtained from: Flottorp S, Oxman A. Identifying barriers and tailoring interventions to improve the management of urinary tract infections and sore throat: a pragmatic study using qualitative methods. *BMC Health Services Research* 2003;3:3.
4. The discussion section should include a more complete discussion of the strengths and limitations of the study.

#### Minor essential

5. It was impressive that all 56 participants took part in all stages of the study (interviews, focus groups and validation). Some discussion of why this was achieved would be useful.
6. The study took 2.5 years. It would be difficult to devote this amount of time to

implementation projects in routine practice, other than for the occasional important (but not urgent) issue. Some discussion of how the method set out in the article can be transferred into routine practice would be worthwhile.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.