Reviewer’s report

Title: Exploration of the beliefs and experiences of Aboriginal people with cancer in Western Australia: A methodology to acknowledge cultural difference and build understanding

Version: 1 Date: 29 May 2009

Reviewer: Carolyn Gotay

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. This is an interesting report that discusses special considerations important in conducting research in Aboriginal populations. Many of the concerns identified by the authors – including a historically-based distrust of research, needs for attending to the values of the population, and the necessity for providing feedback to the community - have been noted in other culturally distinct communities, such as Native Hawaiians. In what ways is research involving the Aboriginal community similar to work in other culturally distinct communities? And in what ways different?

2. The principles advocated in this paper are compatible with and similar to community-based, participatory research (CBPR), about which much has been written. This paper would be enhanced by a discussion of CBPR; the principles that have been identified as key in CBPR could be usefully applied to this example.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. Since no data are presented here, the description of the participants (Table 1) and the questions used (Figure 1) are superfluous to this paper and should be removed.

2. The contributions of the PRECEDE-PROCEED model are not clear.

Discretionary Revisions:

1. I believe that to be consistent with the principles espoused in this paper, at least one author should be a member of the Aboriginal community. I actually consider this a major point, but I don’t feel I can impose this way on the authors, as perhaps there are extenuating circumstances: e.g., they tried to involve an Aboriginal in the writing and no one was interested. However, I think it is critical to build collaborations in all communications about these kinds of studies.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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.