Reviewer’s report

Title: Childhood disability and socio-economic circumstances in low and middle income countries: knowledge review

Version: 1 Date: 16 September 2011

Reviewer: Melissa Gladstone

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CHILDHOOD DISABILITY AND SOCIOECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES IN LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES: KNOWLEDGE REVIEW

This was generally, an excellent paper, which adds to the knowledge surrounding studies done on childhood disability in low and middle income settings. It raises some points which have not been raised before. This study makes it clear that empirical evidence from quantitative studies from low and middle income countries is inconsistent and contradictory. It also identifies qualitative studies and shows that many of these have been methodologically weak.

The methodology to conduct this study through conducting a systematic review is clear and well described. Databases searched, search terms and inclusion criteria were very clear.

I was unsure as to why studies which reported on children and adults combined were not included. Is this because it was difficult to assess as the adults and children were lumped together? It might help the reader to explain how many studies of this type (children and adults together) were identified through the search. (Discretionary revision)

The quality assessment criteria used were very useful and innovative. They clarified the types of studies which need to be done in the future to provide more robust data. It might help the reader however, to provide some information on how and where these quality assessment criteria were formulated and why other formulae were not used. (Discretionary revision)

Table 3 was not included in the submission so I am unable to comment on this table. (Minor essential revision)

In the discussion, the authors discuss how “studies with neurodevelopmental and neuromuscular problems as the outcome reported no association with poor household SEC”. The other explanation here may be that these children may be more likely to have genetic causes for their conditions and therefore may not be so associated with SES. (Discretionary revision)

Overall, this article was well written and provided useful information as to what studies have been conducted and provided some clear pointers as to the way forward for research within this area.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
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