Reviewer’s report

Title: Conceptualizing childhood health problems using survey data: A comparison of key indicators

Version: 1 Date: 30 March 2007

Reviewer: Michael E. Msall

Reviewer’s report:

General: One of the key differences in using the children with special health care needs screener is the fragmentation in US systems of care for basic health services and the higher levels of social disadvantage. In the United States there are many more families who have no family member having finished high school and are disproportionately in single parent households. You have elegantly described that children with activity limitations or children with severe health disorders have multiple challenges impacting on their functioning and participation. These problems include both behavioral and developmental health services. My minor suggestion is that our emphasis need to wholistically address the needs of these children and families especially in optimizing behavioral and social competencies. The other lesson is that most of the children with milder conditions should be viewed as having differences not disorders and that we need to really examine if our services are optimizing school attendance, individual child well being, and having indicators that are evidence based in their outcome management. This is a very important contribution. Michael Msall

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An exceptional article

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests. Michael E. Msall