Reviewer's report

Title: Australia's National Bowel Cancer Screening Program: does it work for Aboriginal Australians?

Version: 1 Date: 23 April 2010

Reviewer: David Currow

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for asking me to review the article “Australia’s National Bowel Cancer Screening Program: Does it work for Aboriginal Australians?”. This is an important case study that illustrates a number of key issues that are of interest to an international audience.

In terms of methodology, the authors described this clearly. They acknowledge that they have had to look at a far broader literature than Australian Aboriginals in order to discover some of the codified data that could potentially inform such an article. Their methods are more than adequate to take forward the work that they have proposed.

The descriptive review and the critical review and interpretation formed the body of the work. These are both clearly set out and deal with issues in a logical development of the challenges encountered in the program and in other screening and health participation programs.

My major concern is the length. Although the Biomed Central Journals do not limit length, this could be edited down substantially for readers. I expect that it will improve the uptake of information tremendously were that to be done.

This paper is worthy of publication. It will be interesting to see a reflection on some of the issues raised in the paper as data collection improves as a result of better self-identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders status improves. It would be good to point out that many of the issues raised are open to prospective evaluation as screening programs respond to some of the issues that are dealt with in the paper.

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