Reviewer's report

Title: Effects of worksite health promotion interventions on employee diets: a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 24 November 2009

Reviewer: Luuk Engbers

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written literature review and it clearly stresses the need for more well-designed worksite health promotion studies that focus on changing the physical but more importantly the social environment.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Yes although the aim of the study appears to be missing in the abstract.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
Yes

3. Are the data sound?

Minor essential revisions, regarding methods sections:
What larger review is meant here? Please elaborate and provide rationale to separate this review from the bigger one!
Please provide rationale for the search limit 1994 to 2009

Minor essential revisions, regarding results section:
In the results section some parts of the text could be improved by replacing words such as ‘most studies’ or some studies with the exact number of studies (e.g. line 9, page 5).

A paragraph about the interventions that were used in the included studies is missing. This would make the interpretation of the results better, especially because the discussion deals with this theme in a great deal.

In the methodological section information on the quality of the non-RCT is not reported, why not?
Please insert paragraph heading e.g. anthropometric outcome/body composition when reporting on BMI etc.

Line 6-7 on page 7 seems to be separated from the text and the rationale for presenting this here is unclear. The aim of the review was to find studies on diet. Work related outcome measures are beyond the scope of the interventions that were studied (paragraph on interventions is missing) in the included and perhaps also of this review. Please elaborate.
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?

Yes, although the order of the text in the discussion could be improved. The strengths and weaknesses of the study should, in my opinion, be moved to the last part of the discussion.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

Minor essential revisions:
The conclusion in the main text is better written than the one presented in the abstracts; the comment on the intervention is missing, please match both conclusions.

Yes, although some nuance in the statements regarding poor designed studies (line 17, page 7) and the need for cost-effectiveness outcome (line 13 page 8) in the discussion should be made. Some additional statements should be added about the difficulty of performing worksite studies (i.e. meeting all the methodological requirements, needs and wishes of the employers/management, etc.) and the difficulty collecting the necessary data needed for economic evaluations (e.g. measurement burden on subjects, etc.). Also in many cases such data collection goes beyond the original goal of the study. Moreover sometimes these results are published elsewhere (is this checked?).

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?

Discretionary revisions:
The typical statement about the publication bias is missing, especially in the area of worksite health promotion a lot of (non-academic) initiatives are not evaluated/published.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?

Yes, although I don’t know about the unpublished reviews.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?

Yes and no, the results of the review are not captured in the title, the abstract is adequate.

9. Is the writing acceptable?

Discretionary revisions:
Line 5 page 6 is unclear what is meant, please rewrite!
Writing is clear and only a few typing errors were found;
Page 7 line 13, ‘measures’ should be replaced with ‘interventions’
Page 8, 1st line; ‘difficult and/or ethically inappropriate in practice.’; especially in
the worksite could be added to this line
Page 6 last line, 3 lb(s) should be 3 kg (?)
Page 6 line 14 ‘it is not clear in many …..’ studies is missing

**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