Reviewer's report

Title: The availability of snack food displays that may trigger impulse purchases in Melbourne supermarkets

Version: 1 Date: 30 January 2012

Reviewer: Emma Boyland

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting and well-written manuscript, describing an under-researched aspect of the obesigenic food environment - the exposure of individuals to snack food displays in their principal shopping establishment. The authors define their research question clearly, address it using clear and useful methodology, describe their findings well and accept the minor limitations of the work. Therefore, I only have a few minor comments:

Minor Essential Revisions

1. On a couple of occasions the term 'soft drink' is used, when it should be 'soft drinks', e.g. P5 in the last paragraph of the background section, and P9 in the paragraph headed 'End-of-aisle displays'.
2. In the paragraph entitled 'Island displays' in the methods section, please add 'and' into the first sentence so that it reads 'Island bin displays are temporary displays within the store that often change AND are often used...'
3. In the section sentence of the discussion, I suggest swapping the two points around so that the sentence reads 'Such displays increase the frequency in a shopping trip that supermarket customers are exposed to snack foods within Melbourne supermarkets and are designed to increase impulse-driven purchases'. I think this would improve the flow.
4. In the first sentence of the last paragraph of the discussion, it should be '...AN audit tool'.
5. Further down in the same paragraph, there is an extra 'an' that needs removing from the sentence that starts 'Further, a previous study from the US...'.
6. In the same sentence as the previous point, there should be an apostrophe after stores i.e. 'stores' usual stocking practices'.
7. In the last sentence of the discussion, 'beverages' should be amended to 'beverage' to read '...food and beverage types'.

Discretionary Revisions

1. With regard to the statement in the background section that snack food displays at checkouts are where retailers attempt to sell items likely to be purchased on impulse, it might be useful here to offer some data on the impulse purchasing rates at such locations if any exist? E.g. a study has shown that X% of consumers purchase a snack item from this location on impulse, just to give
some indication of the scale of the issue.

2. Perhaps a further minor limitation of the study could be noted; namely that the extent of snack food displays in the actual aisles were not included in the analyses? Perhaps this differed between the various locations, even if the displays in the more impulse purchase-based locations that were the focus of the study didn't?

**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.