Reviewer's report

Title: When evidence confirms the value of the intervention: a case study of the maternal iodine supplementation program in Thailand.

Version: 1 Date: 10 February 2012

Reviewer: Karen Daniels

Reviewer's report:

Dear Editors and Authors

RE: MS: 6488724196432151, When evidence confirms the value of the intervention: a case study of the maternal iodine supplementation program in Thailand, Utsana Tonmukayakul, Roman Perez Velasco, Sripen Tantivess and Yot Teerawattananon

Reviewer's report

Not enough is known about the process through which evidence is used in policy making in developing countries. Case studies such as the one reported in this paper therefore make an important contribution to our understanding of knowledge translation within public health in developing countries. My comments are therefore expressed with the intent of strengthening the submitted article. I do not think that the article in its current format is ready for publication. The article needs a major language edit. If the article is resubmitted after such an edit then I would be very happy to comment even further.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

As a reviewer I found this paper very hard to read. Partly this related to the style, structure and language use. To me these were not sufficiently coherent and hence I struggled to understand what the red thread, key message, or main storyline was. At times this seemed to be a story about the process of evidence use and at other times it seemed to be a story about what evidence was important to use. To me the story of how the evidence was used should be the most important for a journal like Public Health. The story of what evidence was used and why it was important is better suited to a literature review. In order to resolve these issues the authors need to engage in a major language edit with an English language science writer. The science writer then needs to either be added as an author or included in the acknowledgements so as to avoid ghost-writing. I would also request that the authors look at the style of other correspondence articles published in this journal so as to ensure consistency.

Another major concern I have is that the authors write this story as if it is fact, when it is actually based on the opinions and experiences of the authors. Another
person telling this story may tell it very differently. I have no problem with this, but
the authors need to be upfront that this is their story and their version of events.
The alternative is that the authors use this as a starting point for a full qualitative
case study in which all relevant stakeholders are interviewed and represented in
the research findings.

The retelling of the story of evidence use would be greatly enhanced by the use
an existing policy process model or conceptual framework. As a starting point the
authors may wish to consult Buse K, Mays N, Walt G: Making Health Policy. New
York: Open University Press; 2007, in which such models are summarised.

The authors need to adhere to the referencing conventions prescribed by the
journal as this has not been followed thus far.

- Minor Essential Revisions
None at this stage

- Discretionary Revisions
None at this stage.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a
statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare I have no competing interests.