Reviewer's report

Title: Transferability of intervention in health education: a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 5 April 2012

Reviewer: Olaf M Dekkers

Reviewer's report:

The authors have performed a systematic review on an important topic.

Major Compulsory Revisions

I have some general problems with the article:

1. The review is mainly descriptive, i.e. it only describes what other authors have reported. That is hardly a help for the reader, who wants to see a more conclusive review. Very shortly: 'who is right, who is wrong'. Are there ways to be more conclusive?

2. The review can gain very much by including more examples.

3. The terms applicability/transferability/generalizability/external validity etc are famous for their semantic confusion. The authors could give the article more clarity if these terms are used throughout the article with one meaning.

4. The authors should probably make a distinction between articles with empirical evidence and articles with a more conceptual approach.

Page 4. I have some problems with the first research question whether there exists a shared definition. Since inclusion was based on a specific interpretation of transferability it seems no question that there will be a shared definition. I think either the search strategy should be broadened, or the question should be dropped. As can be seen from section B, the authors do not more than a descriptive overview of the semantics.

Minor Essential Revisions

Why not Embase?

Page 4: how was 'original article' defined?

Discretionary Revisions

Page 3. Maybe a few sentences about what is meant with health-education with help the the reader. I would suggest to give an example.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being
published

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