Reviewer’s report

Title: The effectiveness of knowledge translation strategies used in public health: a systematic review

Version: 2 Date: 30 June 2012

Reviewer: Neale Smith

Reviewer’s report:

The authors of this manuscript have done an effective job of responding to the reviewers’ comments. The following I think are particular strengths of the revised manuscript: clear indication that, giving the limited number of studies involved, few if any strong conclusions can be drawn; it is clearly indicated how many of the primary studies are related to each claim; the methods section is made more clear and readable with the use of sub-headings; strengths and limits are nicely described.

I have perhaps a couple of minor quibbles, as noted below, which the authors can address if they feel appropriate, but otherwise I am happy to see this proceed to the publication stage.

• Page 7: the authors state that they used EPOC filters to search for “relevant study designs”. I wonder what these designs are. They are identified later (pg 9) but perhaps this point is the right place to provide that information? Further, whether here or on page 9 as present, it might be worth noting that the filters exclude qualitative and mixed method studies—this serves to set up the Conclusion claim (pg 24) that valuable information could be obtained from such literature.

• Page 12: The paragraph which begins with “KT strategies…” describes data extracted from the 5 included studies, but the information from Ref #23 does not appear to be provided here, and I think for completeness sake it should be.

• Page 14: the authors might specify what measure of “change in knowledge” was used in the Barwick et al study.

• Page 16: the authors suggest that an intervention of one day in length may be “too short” to affect practice—while that seems not unreasonable, the claim would be stronger if there was a reference from the literature to support it

• Page 21: the authors suggest that in their review they found “culture” to be an important influence on research use—it wasn’t clear to me which of the 5 studies they were relying on to support that claim … but I may have missed it, I admit

• Page 23: first full paragraph… I do not think that use of self-report measures is “inherent” to KT literature and would ask for a less deterministic word to be employed here

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests

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.