Reviewer’s report

Title: A comparative analysis of early child health and development services and outcomes in countries with different redistributive policies

Version: 2 Date: 1 October 2013

Reviewer: David Walsh

Reviewer’s report:

Minor Essential Revisions

Thank you for making all the changes you have made: the paper is clearly much stronger as a result.

1. I only have one comment of any particular note remaining (plus additional minor/discretionary revisions below). The authors have supplied more details of their use of Navarro & Shi’s framework for the selection of countries, which is very useful. Navarro and Shi used a category of ‘conservative or fascist’ dictatorships and so included Greece, Spain and Portugal. I think readers would be surprised to see Cuba classed as such. I think you need to justify/explain the choice of Cuba under this heading, or create a modified heading.

2. In the same section of the methods, the text reads as though Spain, Portugal and Greece are still dictatorships. This should be clarified.

Discretionary Revisions

1. The weakness of the paper (as acknowledged by the authors) relates to the extent to which conclusions can be drawn from analysis of just five countries, one per political category. The new text with comparisons to UNICEF data which has been added to the ‘limitations’ section of the Discussion is really helpful in reinforcing the choice of countries, and the interpretation of results. It might be helpful to place reference to that text earlier in the manuscript (e.g. methods section) to strengthen the paper overall

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