Reviewer’s report

Title: A cross-sectional pilot study of the Scottish Early Development Instrument: A tool for addressing inequality

Version: 3 Date: 31 October 2013

Reviewer: Sandy Tubeuf

Reviewer’s report:

I do not think that the authors have addressed my comments rigorously in their revised version and I would like them to reconsider the following comments I have made before:

- the additional sentence on reporting bias at the end of the discussion does not rigorously include the large literature that exists on proxy-respondents and this should be mentioned and cited in addition to the study of the reliability of the EDI. Children’s outcomes are currently part of a number of research work and the authors cannot ignore this in their paper (see the EQ-5D young people being tested)

- I appreciate that the authors choose to stay away from the debate on who should fund the collection of population-level data on child development in Scotland. However I am afraid that the use of terms such as reasonable costs, affordability, etc carry judgmental statements and so they should either be left out from the text, or be more developed but as it currently is in the paper, the authors cannot argue that they are out of the debate.

In addition, the sentence at the end of the results section about affordability is inappropriate as this is not a result from the analysis but clearly a discussion point where debate opens...

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: no competing interest