Reviewer’s report

Title: The potential for multi-disciplinary primary health care services to take action on the social determinants of health: actions and constraints

Version: 2 Date: 8 April 2013

Reviewer: Denise Fry

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Response to Revised Manuscript from Baum et al: The potential for multidisciplinary primary health care services to take action on the social determinants of health: actions and constraints
Denise Fry 8 April 2013

I believe the authors have responded adequately in the revised manuscript to my previous comments and the comments of the other reviewers.

I can see that if the authors had pursued some of my suggestions the paper would be too long. Some of these questions/issues such as: what capacities should comprehensive PHC have, and what are the developmental steps which would enable comprehensive PHC to evolve from more narrow forms of PHC do deserve papers of their own. I look forward to them.

Perhaps the paper’s conclusions could be updated to briefly refer to the McCann Review of Non Hospital Services and the SA Minister for Health’s decision in March 2013 to cut some key PHC services, as an example of the policy environment becoming less supportive of PHC generally, let alone comprehensive PHC. If there’s room, the very questionable ‘evaluation framework’ used by McCann could be mentioned to indicate the inappropriate methods and inadequate evidence used to make funding and policy decisions on PHC.

On p21 the paper refers to PHC workers from ‘North’, ‘West’ and ‘South’. These references should be anonymised.

There are just a few minor things that need attention.

• P8 3rd line up from the bottom ‘workers’ awareness’ rather than ‘workers awareness’
• P 9 line 2 ‘PHC workers’ reactions to these dilemmas’ rather than ‘workers reactions...’
• P24 top line ‘..that had once been acceptable’ rather than ‘one acceptable’
• P27 line 4 ‘deep rooted’ rather than ‘deep root’.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
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.