Reviewer’s report

Title: Point-of-sale tobacco advertising in Beirut, Lebanon following a national advertising ban

Version: 2 Date: 3 March 2013

Reviewer: Jennifer Pearson

Reviewer’s report:

I commend the authors for being so responsive to our critiques and I think this is a much stronger paper. I still question the value of including the candy/cash register and spatial data in this manuscript. It would be a much tighter paper if it reported only on advertising in context of the ban.

Discretionary Revisions
• The discussion of Lebanese smoking prevalence gives a bit more context to the reader. I’m not sure that the discussion of youth smoking rates makes sense now that the authors have removed school data.

Minor Essential Revisions
• Explain what “the sign can be no more than A5 in size” means. What are the dimensions?

Major Compulsory Revisions
• I still find the statement that stores shifted their advertisements to the interior problematic. The empty sign holders could also be a sign of compliance with the law. Your data do not tell you if the signs that were once outside are now inside the stores.
• Results – I appreciate the inclusion of the pilot data and look forward to the validation study for the Where am I at? app. I still highly recommend that you ortho-rectify your GPS data to increase your spatial accuracy if you choose to report your spatial results. If you report distance to the next outlet, please clarify is that is straight-line distance or via the road network. (I recommend road network.)
• Additionally, I’m not convinced that the spatial data tells us anything important here. My assumption is that many urban areas would have the same results. You could remove all spatial data from this manuscript and make it a much tighter report on the POS environment. If you want to stick with the spatial results, then give some context. Why is this important? Are there more tobacco outlets in this district than in other published literature? You mention this very briefly (exposure to tobacco outlets) – please expand and link to the purpose of your manuscript.

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

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare I have no competing interests