Reviewer's report

Title: Challenges in defining an optimal approach to formula-based allocations of public health funds

Version: 1 Date: 21 January 2007

Reviewer: Lalit Dandona

Reviewer's report:

General

This paper articulates well the nuances and limitations of formula-based public health funding allocations in the United States. It is presented clearly and makes a useful contribution to the debate on enhancing the evidence base for public health funding allocation decisions.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. As this paper is based on discussion of public health funding allocations in the United States, it would be preferred that the title of the paper and the summary on page 14 state so explicitly.

2. Figure numbers in the legends on page 20 are not the same as those shown with the figures.

3. It would be easier for the reader to understand the purpose of Figure 2 for a hypothetical disease if the legend could be expanded to indicate the intended use of the trends shown for the two states.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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