Reviewer’s report

Title: Are hygiene and public health interventions likely to improve outcomes for Australian Aboriginal children living in remote communities? A systematic review of the literature

Version: 2 Date: 16 March 2008

Reviewer: Stephen Luby

Reviewer’s report:

Discretionary Revisions:

The rationale for the review is more clearly presented in the revised manuscript. Nevertheless, it would be helpful to readers if the authors included more explanation of the difference between the objectives and focus of this review in contrast to the more narrowly focused efficacy reviews common in the literature. These arguments were clearly presented in long form in response to the reviewer’s critique. A few sentences in the manuscript would be helpful.

It remains somewhat unclear how studies were excluded, i.e. from my knowledge of the literature it is unclear to me why some studies were excluded. Two changes that might improve clarity include

1) a description of the time frame of the review (i.e. work published after 2004 appears to be excluded.)

2) Figure 1 notes that 306 articles were judged as ‘not appropriate’ it would be informative to the readers to have the reasons for these exclusions reported by category (e.g. inappropriate study design, developed country setting, inappropriate outcomes, etc)

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have received research funding from soap manufacturers in the last 5 years.