Reviewer's report

Title: Gatekeepers of health: a qualitative assessment of child care centre staff's perspectives, practices and challenges to enteric illness prevention and management in child care centres

Version: 1 Date: 1 February 2008

Reviewer: Rochelle Watkins

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript describes research that can help inform strategies to manage enteric illness in child care centres, however, substantial revisions are required to reach a publishable standard.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Writing style particularly in the introduction and discussion. For example, over half of the paragraphs in the introduction effectively begin with the words In Canada or similar, and the study objectives on page 5 lack clarity. The sentence prior to the objectives also requires supporting evidence. The discussion would benefit from revision to decrease repetition and promote interpretation in the context of relevant public health and infection control literature, which is currently lacking.

2. Methods would also benefit from revision for example, the second sentence in the methods section (which distracts from the purpose of the methods) would be unnecessary if the criteria of being regulated was included in the objectives, as it appears to have been in practice. The text in the 5th sentence of the methods is not necessary. Other statements used in the methods section could be more specific such as memos were written describing the group. The first paragraph of the results could be moved into the methods to improve the flow. A clearer description of analysis methods is also required as it is currently imprecise.

3. The presentation of the five major themes in the second paragraph of the results appears to differ from the subsequent text. The concept illustrated by the quote used on page 13 could also be more effectively presented in the text rather than reproducing the closed question used. Also unsure that the use of the concept of diagnosis in the theme label on page 12 corresponds to the supporting text for this theme, and in general theme labels could be further refined to more closely reflect theme content.

4. For readers to interpret major conclusions related to the need for flexibility and clarity in guidance provided, a clear presentation or summary of the necessary background is required, and more detail in the results regarding the major finding (based on the abstract) of the need for flexibility and modification/adaption would
be useful.

- Minor Essential Revisions
  1. In-text citations need to be correctly formatted. The introduction of the acronym NDM on page 21 is unnecessary.

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests