Reviewer's report

Title: Planning ahead in public health? A qualitative study of the time horizons used in public health decision-making

Version: 1 Date: 10 September 2008

Reviewer: David Gray

Reviewer's report:

No revision necessary

Changes within the NHS are frequently politically-driven, imposing constraints on those charged with improving health care. The authors have established that the decision-makers feel that the time horizon imposed upon them is too short to achieve the gains in public health that are considered important by those in the field.

Ideally, the views of Chief Executives should have been included but the range of views sought already ranges across the spectrum of care, from a local to a national level.

The paper is clearly written and warrants publication. I do not feel that any revisions are necessary.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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