Author’s response to reviews

Title: What Makes Public Health Studies Ethical? Dissolving the boundary between research and practice.

Authors:

Donald J Willison (don.willison@utoronto.ca)
Nancy Ondrusek (nancy.ondrusek@oahpp.ca)
Angus Dawson (a.j.dawson@bham.ac.uk)
Claudia Emerson (claudia.emerson@srcglobal.org)
Lorraine E Ferris (Lorraine.Ferris@utoronto.ca)
Raphael Saginur (rsaginur@ottawahospital.on.ca)
Heather Sampson (heather.sampson@utoronto.ca)
Ross Upshur (ross.upshur@gmail.com)

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On behalf of my colleagues, I am pleased to provide, for your consideration, our manuscript titled “What makes public health studies ethical? Dissolving the boundary between research and practice”. As requested, I have revised the formatting to fit the style for a debates-style paper. The revisions represent a re-structuring of the paper into “Background”, “Discussion”, and “Summary” sections with five sub-sections in the Discussion section that map out the context of our work, why we decided to build on an existing ethics framework, rather than start de novo with a separate conceptual framework, an overview of the core 10 questions, how the framework would be applied, and how this framework fits with other calls for ethics reform.

As indicated in our original submission, we believe this paper presents a constructive solution to a live issue identified by researchers globally – the need for reform of the ethics governance process. On this issue, other ethics guidance documents, including the recently revised Declaration of Helsinki and the forthcoming revised CIOMS, are silent. For this reason, we believe that this paper, on a timely topic, would appeal to the broad readership of BMC Medical Ethics.

If accepted into BMC Medical Ethics we ask that consideration be given to cross-referencing in BMC Public Health, to provide greater exposure to public health researchers and practitioners.

We look forward to your response to this inquiry.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Willison