Reviewer’s report

Title: Implementation evaluation of the Dutch 'national heat plan' among long-term care institutions in Amsterdam: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 10 October 2012

Reviewer: Graham Bickler

Reviewer’s report:

This is a simple and relevant study of increasing relevance. Its findings will be of interest to those involved in climate change adaptation.

Minor essential revisions

There are several examples where some simple edits would improve the text - though there are no points where it can’t be understood. For example in line 1 of background, 'strongly' should be 'large' or 'significant'.

The response rate was a disappointing 50%. The authors do comment on this, but it would help if there was more explanation to allow a better understanding of what biases might result from this. How did responders differ from non-responders?

I was surprised that there were only 54 eligible institutions in Amsterdam, though this may simply reflect my lack of understanding of the health and social care system in Holland. More importantly, it would help if the authors could say more about the institutions and their residents. How many? What levels of dependancy? This would help provide insights into the generalisability of the findings beyond Amsterdam. One particular issue is that in systems that invest in domiciliary care for the elderly, those in institutions will be more dependant than in systems where such investment is lacking.

There is some evidence from English hospitals, that while awareness of the national heatwave plan is high, particularly amongst senior staff, it is lower in frontline staff, and that frontline interventions probably don’t actually happen. In this paper, respondents were managers, so it would be helpful if the authors could comment on whether the responses really describe what happens in all of the institution.

Discretionary revisions

I wondered if the authors were too optimistic about what has happened in the last 3 years since the Dutch heat plan was published. I note that they say 'only a modest increase' but those cooling facilities that had the largest increases in the past 3 years (Table 1) were those with low prevalences.

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:**

My partner is an academic who has published extensively on heatwave epidemiology, and she is referenced several times in this paper. Other than that I have no competing interests'