Reviewer's report

Title: Building health systems capacity in global health graduate programs: reflections from Australian educators

Version: 3 Date: 3 June 2012

Reviewer: Lucy Gilson

Reviewer's report:

I found this a difficult paper to review.

I am entirely sympathetic with the intent of the paper, its focus and many of the arguments being made. But I was frustrated by the lack of evidence presented and used to support those arguments. I wanted more experience to be presented - more details of the programmes described in terms of how they conceptualise health systems, and practically how they approach teaching on the subject, for example. But also more consideration of what the difference is between specialist and cross-cutting teaching in practice, and the pros and cons of these approaches -- and also more information for example on what students go on to do and how do they subsequently rate their teaching experience as a preparation for that work; who the teachers are and what experience they bring to bear on the teaching....

Overall I think it would be helpful to progress these important debates by moving beyond an opinion piece towards more careful consideration of what is being done and reflection on that and its appropriateness - and the real lessons that can be drawn for others.

So as major compulsory revisions I propose:

1) a selected set of specific questions or issues to consider within the paper (e.g. in terms of content, specialist vs. integrated teaching and practice of teaching)
2) the addition of more details on courses offered and experience in relation to those courses
3) if possible, consideration of the needs for this area of teaching -- as identified through engagement with potential employers and/or student feedback after courses are complete
4) the identification of lessons for teaching linked back to the initial questions.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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