Reviewer’s report

Title: Improving the Use of Research Evidence in Guideline Development: 8. Synthesis and presentation of evidence

Version: 3 Date: 23 October 2006

Reviewer: John N Lavis

Reviewer’s report:

General

- The authors did not provide a written response to my previous comments, however, I cross-checked all of my comments against the revised paper and all of my comments appear to have been addressed.
- The authors have improved the paper significantly.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

- None

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

- None

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

- The paper’s subtitle could be modified to read “Critical appraisal and commissioning of systematic reviews and synthesis and presentation of evidence” if the authors wanted to fully capture the content of their paper.
- The objective as stated in the abstract doesn’t stand alone given the reader has to read the rest of the abstract to identify the four key questions. It would be helpful to provide an abbreviated list of the questions when the objective is introduced.
- The section called “What WHO is doing now” would benefit from breaking the paragraphs differently. The fourth, fifth and sixth sentences of the first paragraph could be combined with the first sentence of the second paragraph.
- The last sentence in the third paragraph of the section called “When and how should WHO undertake or commission systematic reviews” appears to be redundant.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

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.