Reviewer's report

Title: Priority Setting and Health Policy and Systems Research

Version: 1 Date: 19 August 2009

Reviewer: Tracey Koehlmoos

Reviewer's report:

1) In Section 3, it is worthy of consideration that a number of working paper and one or two high quality publications have emerged from the three phases of the research. Potentially, the paragraphs would be strengthened by adding the citation to the papers at the end of the appropriate paragraph—without necessarily listing them, discussing them or otherwise further mentioning what they include.

2) On page 13, you use the phrase “Proposals were made comparable cross sectors…” This sentence is very confusing. Do you not mean, “across sectors”? 

3) On page 14, the sentence starting “Priority setting exercises inevitably need to…” might strengthened through rephrasing as Priority setting exercises inevitably need to take into account their (the) target audience” or “Priority setting exercises inevitably need to take the composition of their target audience into account.”

4) Similarly on page 14, the sentence that begins with “However…” and includes “and there is therefore” needs a fresh look.

5) Also, I find the coloring of Figure 1 and Figure 2 difficult to read on the computer. I recommend changing to black lettering for the column and row titles and a less vibrant background overall.

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:

It is worthy of note that I work on two projects funded by the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research (from a total of 15+ funded projects on which I am engaged). However, I have no financial, patent, stock or additional salary interest to gain through the review and publication of this manuscript. I do not have any other competing interests. It would be difficult to find a health systems researcher who was not somehow connected to the Alliance HPSR.