Reviewer's report

**Title:** Knowledge in process? Exploring barriers between epidemiological research and local health policy development.

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 6 December 2009

**Reviewer:** Michael A. Albert

**Reviewer's report:**

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

1. Health Research Policy and Systems considers the following article types: Commentary, Research and Review articles. This article appears to be more of a Review than Research. Perhaps the format could be restructured to be a literature review? As described in the Methods, the authors “used different search strategies in order to find relevant literature”, which is a review. As currently written, I find it difficult to follow and distracting from the discussions (which do have a value, but not as a research paper - as much of what is being discussed has been reviewed already, this might also be considered a commentary in terms of reviews of research utilization in the Dutch context).

2. In terms of methods, the document does state that an inventory of epidemiologists was done through submission of narratives (which could indeed be considered as Research). However, it is unclear from the paper what sort of process was used in selecting the RHS epidemiologists, what sort of analysis was done with these narratives, and how the narratives contributed to the conclusions made in the paper.

3. Again in methods, there seems to be a longer description of the methods taken (mapping, context analysis, etc) in the abstract than in the actual paper. Unfortunately the methodology must be elaborated before this research/review could be replicated.

4. On page 6, paragraph 3 (beginning “We classified the barriers into four domains”): how was this classification achieved? When analyzing narratives and qualitative data (the research component of this paper), specific strategies ought to be taken to ensure that the study can be replicated.

5. On page 10 paragraph 2, where the manuscript is summarizing the findings, it seems like the findings were discussion points rather than results from research.

6. On page 10 in the last paragraph, it states: “we can conclude that the interaction model seems to be the best usable model”, but the document has not explained how this conclusion was reached. While their conclusions COULD be supported by data, I cannot find evidence of this link in the submitted manuscript.

7. The conclusions (page 12), seem to be those of the researchers whose papers
are reviewed here. Again, perhaps this paper is better written as a review.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. There are some minor writing issues that ought to be revised (eg: Results section talks about “paragraphs” but this should read “sections” as it actually it contains 12 paragraphs - I was actually confused whether I was still in the “Results” section, or onto discussions).

2. Several of the references are labelled in different formats (page 7 there is a superscript “28” and another “18”, while the rest of the document is using a different format, eg: [17].

3. The referencing is confusing as many of the references are only found in the tables, yet it would be nice to have them link to the main document.

4. Page 11, first line: “In paragraph 3.4” - I do not know what this is referring to.

... There are other minor essential revisions, but due to the fact that Major Compulsory Revisions are requested, minor revisions should be left until the major revisions are addressed, in case the document changes dramatically, making the minor revisions obsolete.

Discretionary Revisions

None at this time

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.