Reviewer's report

Title: A Systematic Review on Methods of Health Research Economic Impact Evaluation

Version: 4 Date: 26 January 2010

Reviewer: Steven Wooding

Reviewer's report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

I do not think there are any major revisions required to ensure the paper is factually accurate, if sometimes slightly obtuse. I'm not convinced that the paper advances the field in any major way, but it could be a useful review of previous work.

- Minor Essential Revisions

The following revisions should be made to ensure the paper is accurate and to improve its comprehensibility:


p4 "Case studies examine the impact of specific healthcare research, investigate the details of return and propose ideas for increasing it." -- Move this paragraph after the next one - why discuss case studies, return to macroeconomic evaluations and then talk about case studies again?

p8 "In the UK study 'Medical Research – What’s it worth?' the QALY and impact on the GDP of the UK (the ‘spillover” change to "In the UK study 'Medical Research – What's it worth?’ the QALYs gained and impact on the GDP of the UK (the 'spillover"

p9 "An attribution of 50% is considered acceptable in some studies, and a sensitivity analysis of 30-70% has been used to guesstimate the degree of uncertainty [11]" rephrase as "An attribution of 50% is considered acceptable in some studies, and a sensitivity analysis of 30-70% has been used to reflect the uncertainty in the estimate". [11]"

p9 "Thus, when measuring the return of pharmacologic research on cardiovascular disease, it must be considered that only one-third of mortality and morbidity reduction may be attributed to pharmacologic developments." change 'must' to 'could' - I think must implies too much certainty.
p12 "The benefits of local investment in the research results of other countries should not be overlooked." Unless there is specific evidence to cite about this reword to: "The potential benefits of local investment…"

p13 "Following the Bangkok forum in 2000, various methods of needs-assessment were defined and implemented. " I think there should be a reference here to evidence that the balance of investment has changed, my impression (but it is only that) is that although the 10/90 gap had been identified, little had happened in the way of reprioritisation.

- Discretionary Revisions

None

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I work for an organisation that carries out significant work in the area of research evaluation hence the overall fate of the field may affect the fortunes of the organisation.