Reviewer's report

Title: Unpacking Vertical And Horizontal Integration And Integrity: Pathways For Childhood Overweight/Obesity Programs And Planning, A Canadian Perspective

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Reviewer: Kim Raine

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting and timely article that I believe would fit well into the “debate” section of the journal. It is generally well written and the literature reviewed is complete. My comments are meant mainly to assist the authors in refining the article for ease of readability and focus.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Page 13. The paragraph describing the Action Schools! BC project is not referenced at all. How can the statements regarding outcome be justified? These statements either need to be referenced, or if one of the authors has a working knowledge of the inner workings of the project, that needs to be stated or reference must be made to program documents/ personal communication etc.

Minor Essential Revisions

2. The first paragraph in the discussion makes reference to the apparent multi-level sources of causation for childhood obesity, but doesn’t reference this statement. On the next page (page 10), advances in socio-ecological thinking relevant to obesity, and systemic environmental influences are discussed. I think it would be helpful to the reader to move these paragraphs up front in the section to set the stage as to why v/h integration is appropriate in this context.

3. A few grammatical issues on page 10
   a. Page 10, last line of first paragraph should read: “physical activity and nutritional issues”
   b. Page 10 second paragraph last line should read: “addressing the obesity increase”
   c. Page 11, middle paragraph, first sentence should read: “Literature suggests consistent…”
   d. Page 12 Last paragraph, “A Canadian initiative” (the is inappropriate as Calgary is also Canadian

4. Page 14. The paragraph describing the report “Intersectoral Action…” seems out of place in the text. This could be shortened and integrated into the description of Figure 1

5. The implications section, particularly the sections on practice and final thoughts need to be condensed somewhat, as they lose focus. It may be useful
to keep focus to obesity-specific implications, integrating some of the ideas from previous sections in here to keep the focus

Discretionary Revisions

6. The discussion of key concepts up front is good. However, I found it a bit long and rambling at times. To maintain focus and get the reader to the “meat” of the paper more quickly, I would suggest

a. Deleted the long quote from the Government of Canada on page 6
b. Shortening the section on integration significantly (the examples do not add a lot to the discussion and are far removed from childhood obesity – eg. Seniors service mapping

c. Removing reference to the “European integrity principle, as applied to the European Union” on page 8.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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