Reviewer’s report

Title: Knowledge translation strategies to improve the use of evidence in public health decision-making in local government: a logic model for intervention design.

Version: 2 Date: 6 February 2013

Reviewer: Anita Kothari

Reviewer’s report:

This manuscript responds to calls in the KT literature for increased description of intervention development. The intervention itself is aimed at public health practice in local government. Based on the correspondence available to me, it seems as though the paper has already been through some revision. Thus, my comments are meant to help the authors focus more clearly in this direction.

MAJOR COMMENTS

1. My starting point is the purpose of the paper as stated in the abstract: The purpose of this paper is to describe the design of a logic model to underpin a KT intervention for public health decision-making in local government. If this is so, then:

   a. P 7 – Another, albeit similar, purpose is offered here: The purpose of the paper is to describe the development and content of the intervention. Then on p. 8 the following is written: The purpose of this paper is to describe the process for the design of a logic model to underpin a KT intervention for PH decision-making in LGs. For clarity I would suggest using the same purpose statement offered in the abstract.

   b. The description of the intervention is offered in the Results section. On p. 17 the manuscript starts to describe implementation of the intervention, which is not related to the purpose offered above. Perhaps the authors could present this section as an Intervention Implementation Plan using the appropriate verb tense (e.g., Group training would be held biannually in a central location; A modular approach would be used to…).

   c. P. 20 – “The KT4LG intervention was designed using a partnership approach and …” As a reader, this was surprising for me because the methods did not describe stakeholder involvement in the development of the intervention. The methods only describe using a: scoping review, systematic review, survey and in-depth interviews. If the in-depth interviews are seen as “partner contribution” then this needs to be emphasized and justified in the description of the interviews. Otherwise the partnership approach, if important, needs to be given due attention in the paper.

2. Limitations of the intervention (and developmental approach) need to be included. For example, the intervention is complex and perhaps daunting for
small-scale public health departments and/or researchers with limited research funding. As well, the networking approach, which arose from respondents, was downplayed in the intervention implementation plan; what are the implications of this given its strong presence in the KT social interaction literature?

3. P. 13 – I appreciate that the qualitative study has been published, but it would be helpful to provide a little bit more methodological information here so that readers have a comprehensive picture of this data source. In particular, please add the sample size, who was interviewed (managers? Front line practitioners?) and how they were sampled.

MINOR COMMENTS

4. P5. The acronym “LG” is offered for the first time. I suggest writing it out in full the first time, accompanied by a definition.

5. P. 6 – The paragraph that starts off “Given the distinct need…commencement” seemed a little out of place although it might be important background information for the reader. My suggestion is to shorten and then move it to Context section.

6. It would be helpful to include an explicit sentence that states that the words “program” and “intervention” are used interchangeably in this paper.

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:

I declare that I have no competing interests