Reviewer’s report

Title: Health Inequity in Access to Bariatric Surgery: A protocol for a Systematic Review

Version: 1 Date: 25 November 2013

Reviewer: Alexander Tsertsvadze

Reviewer’s report:

1. Will the authors specify the population of interest geographically speaking? Will their review be limited to the North American population only or beyond? This will bear on the extent of applicability of the review findings.

2. ‘Data synthesis’ section needs more detail/clarity on statistical techniques as well as how summary effect measures of differences between the compared populations (operated vs. not operated) in the characteristics of interest (e.g., sociodemographic, ethnicity, occupation, sex, religion, education, SES, health insurance status) will be expressed (e.g., RR, OR, prevalence ratios, mean difference, etc…). Some of these outcomes may be continuous, dichotomous, or categorical (nominal, ordinal).

3. For ‘Data synthesis’ section, in which cases the authors will consider pooling the data? What type of pooled effect measures will be considered for dichotomous outcomes and continuous outcomes (e.g., weighted mean difference, standardized mean difference)?

4. Will the authors plan to identify if there is any heterogeneity? In case of heterogeneity, will the authors plan to investigate any subgroup effects, if data permits? If yes, how (subgroup analysis, regression)?

5. In the Discussion section, will the authors provide an example of future research which will be informed by the findings of this review (e.g., finding suggesting inequities in access to bariatric surgery)?