Reviewer’s report

Title: Trends in child and adolescent obesity prevalence according to socioeconomic position: protocol for a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 27 March 2014

Reviewer: Carolyn CS Summerbell

Reviewer’s report:

The authors seek to answer an extremely important and interesting, i.e. whether the seemingly levelling off of prevalence of childhood obesity in various countries of the world is the case across all socioeconomic strata.

The authors talk about including evidence from ‘developed’ countries, but excluding evidence from ‘developing’ countries. Why? Surely one of the important things we want to know about is the trend in prevalence by SES in countries experiencing nutrition transition. There is no rationale for excluding ‘developing countries’.

From my limited knowledge of this topic, much of the sort of data which the authors appear interested in, is not published in peer reviewed journals. It is published in government and NGO type reports. For me, if the authors are truly interested in the question they pose, it would seem limited to simply search the evidence published in peer reviewed journals. If the authors only looked at evidence in peer reviewed journals, they make well produce a biased result.

I do think that this type of question is better answered by systematically contacting and analysing all countries governmental organisations and relevant NGOs – including WHO and IASO (as well as looking at the literature published in peer review journals) and potentially performing some secondary analysis on the data.

In short, I worry that a systematic review of the published literature published in peer review journals would provide the authors with a very biased evidence base for the trends in childhood obesity by SES.