Reviewer's report

Title: A review of the use of health examination data from the Health Survey for England in government policy

Version: 1 Date: 11 October 2013

Reviewer: Stefanie Vandevijvere

Reviewer's report:

In general the article is interesting in making the case for the importance of monitoring

Major Compulsory Revisions

-Is it possible to also have a look at how extensively the results of the health examination survey have been picked up and used by non-governmental public health organisations in England for advocacy and action support?

-Is it possible to have a look whether results published as peer review articles have been picked up and used more extensively by policymakers than those not published in the scientific literature?

-Were interviews done only with current government officials or also with people working at the department in the past?

-Table 2: instead of only giving the references, the examples need to be shortly outlined in the table

-Any verification done with government officials (sending them the full tables) to check whether examples collected were comprehensive or whether some important ones might have been forgotten?

-Any interviews done with government expert committees or working groups who probably used the evidence most often?

-Results section: a summary of findings for each of the subtitles would be useful instead of only giving an example, e.g. which parameters have been used the most

-The discussion should clearly state which measures seemed to have been the most useful for policymaking

-Any recommendations to be made for changes to the survey to make it more policy relevant?

-page 12: you state that many self-reported measures are inaccurate, this needs to be supported by appropriate references

Minor Essential Revisions
- Line 1 abstract: change 'stage' by 'stages'
- Last line background abstract: change 'review of policies' by 'evaluation of policies', also elsewhere in the document
- In the background section it needs to be specified to which extent government officials are involved in discussions on which parameters to include in the survey?

Discretionary Revisions
- change 'government policy' in title to 'government policy development and implementation'

**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 not having any conflict of interest with regard to this article