Reviewer's report

Title: Research Partnerships Between Developing and Developed Countries: Are Global Partnerships Always a Good Thing?

Version: 2 Date: 26 November 2014

Reviewer: Solomon (Solly) Benatar

Reviewer's report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

This is a well-written article on an important topic. I am concerned about two deficiencies.

The first is that the authors have fallen into the now common ‘developed world’ pattern of re-labeling what was international research and partnerships as global research and partnerships. This popular trend fails to acknowledge the vital conceptual difference between international health and global health.

International health is based on an individualistic, anthropocentric and biomedical conception of health and focuses on providing assistance with health care and research by health personnel or organizations from some (usually wealthy) nations to others across national or regional boundaries. It is an extension of a charitable conception of modern medical care of individuals and associated public health measures with roots in colonial medicine, tropical medicine and philanthropy.

Global Health is conceptually different in that it refers to the health of individuals and populations in the context of a threatened ecological system that affects the life of all. It is a concept that requires acknowledging the social and societal determinants of health/disease, the interconnectedness and interdependence of all life, and the structure of the global political economy that perpetuates wide North South disparities. The pursuit of global health includes but goes beyond international health activities.

The time has come to distinguish clearly between international health and global health to ensure that the broader issues included in an enlightened perspective on global health are not eclipsed.

The second problem is that the authors have not done a thorough literature review on the topic of international research and international research ethics. Many previous publications have drawn attention to most of the issues these authors have succinctly raised and also many other important aspects of such
international collaboration, as exemplified by some selected references.

Attention to these issues, including changing the world global in many if not all instances throughout the article, and including several additional references could improve the manuscript

Some additional points

Lines 74- 78. A note is required that differentiates between what the Nuffield Council Report ‘states’ and what it ‘provides clear argument for’.

Line 80. I am not sure that ‘parameter’ is the correct word to use here

Line 116. Consider reference to reference number 4 below

Line 132. Consider changing to ‘populations, where contracting an…

Line 144 Consider including reference to references 2 and 3 below

Line 157 – A brief note about the relevance of Keynesian macroeconomics or a reference to a useful explanatory article would be helpful.

Line 169. Spell out THET

Line 228. Surely international peer-reviewed journals should be looking at the quality of the work submitted rather than who wrote it, although the nepotism associated with ‘superior’ journals is hard to overcome!

Line 256. Provide a reference to the AZT work in Zimbabwe

**Level of interest**: An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English**: Acceptable