Reviewer’s report

Title: The challenge of complexity in evaluating health policies and programs: The case of Womens' Participatory Groups to improve antenatal outcomes

Version: 0 Date: 22 Dec 2016

Reviewer: Michael Donnelly

Reviewer's report:

Sorry for the delay, I am time-short until the new year. However, I read the paper just now. In my view, the paper is a brief position statement or commentary on the merits of realist evaluation compared to the well-known MRC Framework Guidance plus the companion guidance on process evaluations. It is a well-written and interesting paper though for many readers it may not present new insights. Indeed, some BMC HSR readers with contrasting perspectives or epistemological positions may be stimulated to reply. I think that the HSR readership might benefit from reading and learning further about realist evaluation and realist thinking and, so, I think that it is worthy of publication as a short report.

Hope that this is helpful.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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Acceptable

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