Reviewer’s report

Title: Curbing the lifestyle disease pandemic: making progress on an interdisciplinary research agenda for law and policy interventions

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Reviewer: Garrett Brown

Reviewer's report:

This was a well written and clear debate piece. As the authors rightly suggest, global policy interest in NCDs is increasing and, as a result, NCDs have become a key subject within global health policy and health diplomacy efforts more generally. Furthermore, as the authors rightly claim, NCDs are a serious health concern for global health policy writ large and more needs to be done in terms of fostering a research-base and effective policy implementation.

That said, it is not clear what is debatable about this 'debate' piece. The above issues are well known to the audiences who will be reading this piece. For example, it is fairly uncontroversial that more and better research on NCDs is necessary so as to properly inform comprehensive evidence-based policy. In addition, in the global health literature, there is already many calls for more and better interdisciplinary research. As part of this, scholars are already looking at issues of norm diffusion across global health policy more broadly, and, in several cases, in relation to particular NCDs. In addition, the majority of research acknowledges the importance of social science research as well as the key role that the study of politics / IR plays in global health policy (although not as much as they should). Lastly, there has been a fair amount written on how research can (or should) interact and inform policy making - and how both international law and WHO regulations can help affect change. Some of this is related to NCDs, most of it is not.

As a result, it would seem that the key debate position of this piece is that these above efforts need to better focus on NCDs to fill existing gaps. Yet, this could be said about nearly any topic related to global health (or any other sector for that matter). What has not been established within the piece is that NCDs are not getting the attention they need within global health governance more generally and that this is an issue of extreme concerns (for the reasons outlined at the beginning of the piece). In other words, at the moment there is nothing terribly controversial about the piece... of course more research should be done, and of course it should attempt to be interdisciplinary, and of course NCDs are a growing risk, and of course the social sciences play a key role in these investigations. As a research agenda for any subject in global health, the question is, who could disagree?
I think all the positions set out in the piece are important, necessary and timely. What I think is missing is a statement about why the problems above are particular to NCDs and why this is highly problematic and potentially shortsighted in the global health literature and policy making more broadly. Giving this narrative strikes out a 'debatable' position that demands reflection and engagement by the reader, not just passive agreement about a research agenda that is inherently sound for any global subject.

**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?**
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Yes

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