Reviewer’s report

Title: Using flawed, uncertain, proximate and sparse (FUPS) data in the context of complexity: learning from the case of child mental health

Version: 1 Date: 29 Mar 2018

Reviewer: Kimberly Hoagwood

Reviewer's report:

This is a very well-written, well-conceived, and important paper documenting an approach to the common problem of flawed data, especially derived from large scale projects seeking to implement higher quality treatments or services in the messy world of children's mental health services. I found that principles, examples, descriptions, and approach very compelling. This approach may well be useful globally as well, as the problems with highly compromised data from which to draw policy or practice conclusions is ubiquitous across the globe.

The one issue that I found incomplete was the distinction drawn in the abstract between complicated systems and complex systems. I expected to see this distinction clearly described in the text of the paper, but it was not. I recommend rewriting the abstract to better reflect the main points from the paper, and either draw out the comparison between complicated and complex systems or eliminate discussion of it in the abstract.

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