Reviewer’s report

Title: Understanding evidence 2: a statewide survey to explore evidence-informed public health decision-making in a local government setting

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Reviewer: Eivor Oborn

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have made good progress in clarifying the methods, focus and contribution of the report. I believe the paper has something interesting to say and the message is much clearer. As such it makes a good contribution to the KT literature and especially in contexts that are non medical.

I have 2 outstanding issues I would point out- which I level to the discretion of the author/editorial team to address. 1) now that the paper is clearer, it does not seem to make theoretic sense to suggest the paper is applying 'diffusion of innovation theory'. In my view this is adding theory for theory's sake (which as the paper points out is what makes academic research less accessible and influential). A specific innovation is not being followed and the paper does not convince me that innovation is what is being looked at or 'diffused' when evidence is being sought after. In what sense is diffusion of innovation different from the diffusion of any idea/information (whether innovation or not). If a particularly piece of knowledge (such as a research report, which might be considered innovative in its idea) was being followed across all informants to assess its uptake or diffusion, then the theory is more suitable. Perhaps more importantly, the study doesn't currently benefit from the innovation body of scholarly thinking; it reads as more of an add on.

2) a minor point, but the '2' in the title does not make sense to me- evidence 2 is not a concept that is readily familiar to many readers I would suspect. Is this Cookeys type 2 gap, Sackett et al's level 1-4 (but only focused on level 2) One of these options is what I would expect in reading the title before reading the paper, though I suspect the authors are meaning the level of evidence that is considered 'research'. If this latter is the case, then perhaps saying 'research evidence' would be clearer for potential readers using a search strategy to find articles that match their interest.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
No conflicts of interest