Reviewer’s report

Title: Implementation effectiveness of health interventions for Indigenous communities: a systematic review

Version: 0 Date: 04 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Don Goldmann

Reviewer's report:

This is such an important topic. I have a few recommendations that may improve the paper, however:

1. The HPW needs to be described in greater depth. I just can't tell how it is administered, leading to the categorical ratings. Inter-rater reliability is important, but are there any other studies showing its validity as a contextual framework? Is it widely used? I had anticipated that the studies you selected would have used the framework, but as I understand the paper, you retroactively tried to apply the HPW to studies selected because they were NCD interventions in indigenous peoples. I found this a bit problematic and need to be convinced that it is OK to apply the HPW retroactively, especially with regard to the availability of key data in the papers. Line 504 give we some pause. In brief, the credibility of the paper hangs in large measure on the credibility of the measurement framework and the availability of data in the papers to complete the framework.

2. Please provide your criteria for what constitutes a significant or important improvement. This is very hard to discern from the brief descriptions. If you look at the paper in BMJ Quality and Safety by Susan Wells et al., you will see how this can be described and categorized. I am not sure that your claim that there was sufficient f/u is correct. The first cited study is merely a pilot with short f/u, for example.

3. The table showing Y/N for various important criteria for study quality is helpful, but I don't see that you actually quantified study quality or examined potential biases closely in each study.
4. The knowledge translation element of the framework needs more detailed description. I'm not sure what is meant from what is in the paper. As described, I at first took this to be some measure of co-design or co-production, or perhaps participatory implementation? Since this element scored low, it will be helpful to say more.

5. In the end, I don't see that you tried to correlate the ratings of the four elements of the framework with successful implementation and improvement. So I am left wondering about the important of the ratings and the framework as a whole.

6. As part of the search, did you "chase" citations in the references that you found with your key works? Sometimes this reveals additional papers and flaws in the key word search strategy.

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