Reviewer’s report

Title: The recurring recruitment challenge in primary care research

Version: 1 Date: 11 June 2010

Reviewer: Brian McKinstry

Reviewer’s report:

Major compulsory revisions
1. Change title to highlight focus on health services research
2. I was disappointed not be told more about the types of research being undertaken, some were clearly observational but two appeared as though they may have an intervention but it was not clear if this was a RCT, cohort study or before and after. This is important as such designs definitely impact on the ability to recruit practices and in their interest in participation. Some involved recruiting patients, but it was not clear if it was the practices themselves or the researchers who were expected to recruit these. The recruitment figures quoted did not make it plain exactly what was being recruited. I wasn’t entirely sure if all of these projects would count as ‘research’ in the narrow sense or service evaluation. All of this needs to be clarified
3. I found the methods and results section a little sparse…how many people were approached and how many interviewed, how many were asked to complete questionnaires and how many did. How were themes derived? Who did the analysis? Were they in-depth or semi-structured? What type of interviews took place, were they recorded and transcribed? Where are the descriptive statistics mentioned? e.g. how big were these studies, how many investigators, patients doctor nurses etc were targeted. Please clarify all this
4. Limitations Given the small number of projects and the specialised nature of the type of research projects involved in this study the authors had understandably difficult in pinpointing what sort of strategies work best, given the inevitable ‘noise’ generated by personalities involved in projects and specific local circumstances. Please add this to limitations

Discretionary revisions
1. I found the language a little woolly in places. At times where the phrase ‘further discussion’ is use I think they mean further research. This could be altered

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

I declare that I have no competing interests