Reviewer's report

Title: Being a quantitative interviewer: qualitatively exploring interviewers' experiences in a longitudinal cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 31 October 2011

Reviewer: Maree O'Keefe

Reviewer's report:

This is a very interesting and well written paper. The authors bring a sensitive and considered interpretation to their data.

The abstract and introduction are appropriate in length and content. The methods are well described.

Minor essential revisions

1. Some discussion of the use of a single focus group is needed in the limitations section in preference to individual in depth interviews. The facilitation of the focus group by one of the research team who was not independent to the study should also be discussed in terms of potential biases such as possible reduction in adverse reporting by participants.

Discretionary revisions

1. The results are organised around three somewhat mechanistic themes and I think there are opportunities for further development of this content. The second theme in particular is long and at times relatively unfocussed. As one suggestion, to increase the impact of the study findings, the authors might consider reorganising this content into themes representing key findings such as:
   1. researcher vs friend
   2. interrupted stories
   3. benefits vs cost of interviewer
   or similar.

2. The first paragraph of the conclusion does not capture the tenor of the study findings. The issue of missed appointments seems at odds with the deeper themes that are addressed so eloquently in the rest of the paper.

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:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'