Reviewer’s report

Title: Opt-out as an acceptable method of obtaining consent in medical research.

Version: 1 Date: 28 December 2010

Reviewer: Mary Wells

Reviewer’s report:

This is a well written paper providing useful evidence of the acceptability of opt-out consent procedures in a cohort study of antibiotic prescribing. It refers to key literature and includes relevant data to illustrate the acceptability of the opt-out method in this context.

It should be made clear that this is a short paper rather than a full empirical paper which discusses all the ethical and practical issues pertaining to the opt-out method. There is no discussion section and limited detail about the aspects of a study which make opt out more or less acceptable.

The purpose of the paper should be made clearer in the abstract, and earlier in the background section, as this is not made clear until the final sentence.

Little information is given about the cohort study itself, and it would be useful to include a figure or box providing further details.

Typo - patient’s should be patients’ page 3

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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