Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Using e-mail recruitment and an online questionnaire to establish effect size: A worked example

**Version:** 2 **Date:** 22 February 2011

**Reviewer:** Ramal Moonesinghe

**Reviewer’s report:**

**Minor Essential Revisions**

1. The authors have clarified their work in this manuscript to some extent. According to them the aim of the study was to assess the feasibility of using a simple e-mail recruitment strategy and online questionnaire to produce an estimated effect size based upon expert opinion to inform sample size estimation for a randomized control trial. They have shown how to calculate the sample size, i.e. the number of participants needed for the e-PIS study to detect a statistically significant difference in recruitment rates. Is this method only applicable to detecting significant differences in recruitment rates for different studies? How can one use this method for a different effect size (e.g. effectiveness of an intervention to increase vaccination rates)? Here we want to calculate the sample size required to detect a significant increase in vaccination rates (not recruitment rates). This has to be clearly addressed in 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.