Reviewer's report

Title: The effect of two lottery-style incentives on response rates to postal questionnaires in a prospective cohort study in preschool children at high risk of asthma: a randomized trial

Version: 1 Date: 23 October 2012

Reviewer: Phil Edwards

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The effect of two lottery style incentives on response rates to postal questionnaires in a prospective cohort study in preschool children at high risk of asthma: a randomised trial

This paper presents results of a factorial (2x2) randomised trial among 771 children and their parents of the effectiveness on response to a questionnaire of (factor A) a lottery for a “daytrip to an amusement park” and (factor B) a lottery to win 12.5 Euro gift vouchers.

There is a good description of the materials (e.g. personalised letter, stamped return envelope, bright coloured questionnaire) and methods used (e.g. methods of generating random sequence).

Minor Essential Revisions

The authors suggest implications for further research that do not seem to follow directly from their study (e.g. evaluation of personalised follow up).

The manuscript appears to conform well to CONSORT guidelines, including a figure showing the flow of participants through the study. It would be very helpful for readers if either figure 2 (or alternatively text added to the results section) can make explicit the numbers who responded in each group, with the percentage that these represent (e.g. daytrip 248/384 (64.6%) vs. no daytrip 253/387 (65.4%)).

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.