Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Reaching the hard-to-reach: A systematic review of strategies for increasing health and medical research with socially disadvantaged groups

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 16 December 2013

**Reviewer:** Julia Frost

**Reviewer’s report:**

Discretionary revisions
The research question is about increasing research (in quantitative terms), where perhaps the paper is actually about improving research (in qualitative terms). As with the research question, perhaps the title should be about ‘improving’ health and medical research, rather than ‘increasing’.

The research methods are generally well defined, with the exception of where the framework for the results came from – e.g. the 5 phases of the research – Was this imposed by the researchers or was it developed from the results? (inductive or deductive?)

The data are sound, and as one would to expect to find for the given question.  P21: Thomas et al () requires a date.

The discussion and conclusion are balanced and supported by the data. More could be made of the implications for commissioners and funders, e.g. that high quality research that seeks to include people from hard to research backgrounds will cost more and take longer. Similarly, the implications will have consequences for research teams, e.g. skilled researchers who can facilitate recruitment/support involvement for the duration of a study.

The limitations are well stated.

The writing is clear and easy to follow.

**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