Reviewer's report

Title: Recruiting and retaining GPs and patients in intervention studies: The DEPS-GP project as a case study

Version: 1 Date: 17 June 2007

Reviewer: Chris Del Mar

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

This is a description about the recruitment aspects of a RCT requiring GPs in Australia to recruit patients. The methods were relatively flexible (and indeed the protocol was changed to recruit more GPs after starting). The methods were not particularly startling (a total of 4-5% of GPs actually did what was wanted), but the Authors believe some aspects of the method are interesting.

However I am not really convinced. It is not clear what lessons I take home from this, if I were in the design stage of, say, a new RCT. There was nothing especially novel in the methods. Perhaps a focus on recruitment as a challenge is important, and to think about what might be important to GPs is important—CPD points, a topic of interest, and so on. However I am not sure this will generate many citations to be honest. Folk interested in a really important information will be more inclined to go to systematic reviews (of the kind quoted in the reference section!). Moreover, much of this is parochial—so that people in the UK for example will not understand the reference to CPD points, Divisions, and so on.

Perhaps the authors would be better to consider taking this paper amplified appropriately to a methodological journal to discuss the broader aspects of the methods than just the recruitment.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Nothing here.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Nothing here.

What next?: Reject because too small an advance to publish

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