Reviewer's report

Title: Engaging participants in a complex intervention trial in Australian General Practice

Version: 1 Date: 23 April 2008

Reviewer: Moira Stewart

Reviewer's report:

Re: Engaging participants in a complex intervention trial in Australian General Practice

Thank you for asking me to review this paper.
I like the paper but there are major deficiencies in content as it is at present.

Major compulsory revisions:

Introduction
Para 1 - Line 6 – brackets
- Line 7 – is this “quality” or “qualitative”?
Last sentence – repeats – more or less - sentence 3 – one or other

Para 2 - Line 9 – importance of consideration
Line 11 – caused;
The recruitment
Description of recruitment (para 1) mixed with results. Still not clear from Figure 1 what was involved in intervention.

Para 2 - Line 5 – “refocus”
Suggest Table 1. Summarising responses
2. Reasons for non-participating (listed as for “participating practices”)

Para 4 - refers to “Delays” – not defined – does this refer to “delay” as a reason given for non-participation?
Sentence – “This was later addressed .........................” should be included in discussion.

Next para - “The incentives ...................”. This para contains separate pieces of information, e.g. does sentence “Some practices ..............” fit under reasons for not participating.

Last para - Begins results
Last sentence - Move to discussion
Discussion

Summarise findings. Some of the reasons for non-participation are more difficult to address than others and may need to be “built in” to proposals. Others are related to more practical organisational arrangements. The points are covered but there needs to be a more concise, structured approach to the flow of “discussion”.

No conclusion

Why is this paper important? Although para 2 alludes to the fact that “the trial is unusual since it addresses the issue of teamwork etc”, there is little mention of this aspect in the paper. Were these team-workers involved in the groups?

In summary, I would not recommend publication of the paper in its current form. However, I think it is of sufficient interest to be reconsidered after major redrafting.

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.