Reviewer's report

**Title:** Comparing Recruitment Strategies in a Study of Acupuncture for Chronic Back Pain

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 1 October 2009

**Reviewer:** Caroline Smith

**Reviewer's report:**

The authors report on an interesting but under-researched whether different recruitment strategies effect recruitment efficiency, patient characteristics and primary secondary trial outcomes. Their findings provide no evidence of any differences on major trial outcomes.

This is a well written paper, and describes secondary analysis of data from a well designed RCT previously reported.

**Minor essential revisions**

Introduction: Please consider re-phrasing the second sentence of the second paragraph.

**Methods**

Please provide further details on the health plan magazine for the non American audience. How often were advertisements placed, and how many in total?

**Discretionary revisions**

Introduction: could the authors consider elaborating further on how different recruitment strategies lead to different conclusions about treatment efficacy.

How often were advertisements placed, and how many in total?

**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.