Reviewer's report

Title: Smoking, dementia and cognitive decline in the elderly, a systematic review

Version: 5 Date: 20 November 2008

Reviewer: Sally Lee

Reviewer's report:

Various literature has been established that, in systematic reviews, studies identified using electronic database search only account for a small proportion of all relevant studies. Other search methods commonly used in systematic reviews are hand-search, snowballing and personal contact/knowledge. Peters et al. used only electronic searching in this study and many important studies might have been missed because the search had not been thorough. I am sorry that there isn't sufficient funding for the hand-search. However it is a not a reason for running a partial review rather a complete systematic review. As many important studies might not have been identified, the conclusions of the study are potentially biased/misleading.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests