Reviewer's report

**Title:** Obese adults attitudes towards individual and population based interventions for obesity: A qualitative community study

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 21 December 2009

**Reviewer:** Lily O'Hara

**Reviewer's report:**

The gap in the literature and the specific research question this study addresses are both well defined.

The data collection and analysis methods are appropriate to the research question and are well described.

The discussion and conclusion are well balanced and adequately supported by the data.

The limitations of the work are clearly stated.

The authors clearly acknowledge the work upon which they are building.

The title and abstract accurately convey what has been found, though there is one section in the abstract that is not as fully described in the results section as it could be (see comment below).

The writing is acceptable, though there are a number of typographical errors in the manuscript.

Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

1. Abstract: Methods: commas used between population level interventions but semi colons used between individual level interventions.

2. Background: In paragraph one the use of italics for ‘Bariatric Surgery’ along side ‘The Biggest Loser’ makes it look like the name of a television show. Suggest removing the italics.

3. Methods: Sampling and Recruitment: The use of the term ‘representative’ in ‘representative community sample’ is inappropriate as the study did not use a random sampling strategy. It seems as though the intent of the authors is to demonstrate that there was a broad range of participants drawn from many sectors of the community via a variety of recruitment methods, which is perfectly valid for this type of study. However using statistical language relating to ‘representativeness’ is unnecessary and inappropriate for the recruitment methodology employed.

4. A broader issue relates to the use of the term ‘sampling strategy’. I would much prefer the authors to use the term ‘recruitment strategy’, again because sampling implies methodically recruiting from a larger known sampling frame, and this is not the methodology used here.
5. Data Collection: Further explanation is required here about the difference between what’s termed ‘public health campaigns’ and ‘social marketing campaigns’. Social marketing is usually regarded as a public health strategy, so there needs to be further explanation here about the distinctions made by the researchers between the two. If the public health campaigns included more than social marketing strategies, it would be useful to name the other strategies included.

6. Results: Gastric banding surgery pg 16 last paragraph before Commercial dieting: There is a typo in the first line: should be ‘participants thought gastric banding’.

7. Commercial dieting: It is not clear what the n and % numbers actually mean. Did only 18% think commercial dieting was effective, or did 18% of participants rank commercial dieting as the least effective as compared to other strategies?

8. The last sentence of the Results section of the Abstract states: ‘Personal experiences with weight and weight loss attempts strongly influenced attitudes.’ This is not clearly explored in the Results section of the paper.

9. Discussion: paragraph 2: the sentence ‘Furthermore we do not really know…’ includes the words ‘such like this’. This should read ‘such as this’ or ‘like this’.

10. Discussion: page 19: first sentence carried on from page 18 states that gastric banding is a ‘widely popular and supported intervention in the community’. There is no reference for this statement and I have not seen any research that indicates the gastric banding surgery is widely popular or widely supported. I suggest this statement be qualified or amended.

11. Discussion: page 20: first sentence carried on from page 19 includes the text ‘highly stigmatised health groups, such as HIV/AIDS’. HIV/AIDS is not a health group; perhaps this should read ‘people with highly stigmatized health conditions, such as HIV/AIDS’. There is an error in the order of the reference numeral 28 and the punctuation towards the end of this same sentence.

12. Second paragraph beginning ‘Clearly there is a need…’: sixth sentence ‘A better understanding of how to create safe and supportive spaces to for obese individuals to engage in physical activity is urgently needed.

13. Third paragraph beginning ‘Overall it is important…’: second sentence ‘Participants commented that interventions were too simplistic by themselves to comprehensively either prevent or support individuals at the individual level.’ This sentence needs rewording. Firstly you can’t ‘prevent or support individuals’; and secondly it sounds odd to say ‘support individuals at the individual level’.

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

14. There are a number of places where a long em dash before some text is followed by a short en dash after the text. These need to be consistently long em dashes.

Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a
Nil

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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

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.