Reviewer's report

**Title:** Understanding of research and informed consent: a Sri Lankan Perspective

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 11 December 2009

**Reviewer:** Michael Parker

**Reviewer's report:**

1. The current introduction suggests that there hasn't been much significant work carried out on informed consent in the context of research in developing countries. There is in fact quite a lot of work in this area, particularly in the African context. This includes key papers by authors such as Molyneux, Marsh, Farsides, Bull, Chokshi and several others. These have tended to appear in journals such as Social Science and Medicine, Bioethics and Developing World Bioethics. This literature is clearly relevant to this paper. It is against the background of these debates that the reported research has the potential to be important. Given this, the paper would be significantly enhanced by an introduction which drew upon this literature and these debates. This introduction should also draw upon the relevant guidelines and reports such as the Nuffield Council on Bioethics.

2. The data are currently presented as coming from interviews with 'participants'. This section really needs to make clear what the differences were (or similarities) between different types of participant eg students, patients, researchers and so on.

3. At the moment the data are presented under themes without any analysis or reflection on what their significance is. This extensive presentation of data is then followed by a very short 'discussion' section. The balance between these two sections needs attention. The discussion section is much too short and is more like a 'conclusion'. There needs to be much more discussion and analysis e.g. About how these data contribute to this wider international debate. The data section and the methods sections could be cut down significantly I think.