Reviewer's report

Title: What is the 'problem' that outreach work seeks to address and how might it be tackled? Seeking theory in a primary health prevention programme.

Version: 2 Date: 5 September 2011

Reviewer: Peter Winch

Reviewer's report:

- The objectives and methodology are clearly described
- Figures 1, 2 and 3 are helpful for understanding the evaluation and its results, but they are not introduced or referred to very much in the text. Referring to them more in the main body of the text would increase the readability of the manuscript.
- In the Abstract, the authors state "The analysis was thematically guided by the concept of 'candidacy' which theorises the dynamic process through which services and individuals negotiate appropriate service use", and also that the paper "identifies further research needed in the theoretical development of both outreach as an approach and candidacy as a conceptual framework". The paper is narrow in its approach to theory, and the corresponding literature cited. The paper does reference sources for the concept of candidacy, but does not the broader literature on why people do or do not access health services. I do not recommend radical changes to this manuscript, but I would like to see 1-2 additional paragraphs in the background section, the discussion section, or both, that:
  1. Makes reference to the broader literature on why people do or do not access health services, and
  2. Situates this study within that broader literature.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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