Reviewer's report

Title: The requirement for prior consent to participate on survey response rates: a population-based survey in Grampian

Version: 3 Date: 20 October 2003

Reviewer: Elaine McColl

Reviewer's report:

General

The authors have responded comprehensively to the comments raised by myself and other readers. The revised version is an excellent paper, which will be extremely useful to other researchers using similar patient databases to identify study participants. I very much look forward to being able to cite this paper.

I am very flattered that the authors should choose to acknowledge the input of myself and my fellow referees by name.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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

There is an error of fact on page 3 of the MS. In England, Family Health Services Authorities (FHSAs) have been replaced by Primary Care Trusts (PCTS). The maintenance of primary care patient registration databases is now the responsibility of the Registration and Medical Records Dept of Contractor Service Agencies, which cover multiple PCTs and are generally coterminous with Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs). See for example http://www.twcsa.nhs.uk/

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

What next?: Accept after minor compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its specialized field or of broad interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

None