Reviewer’s report

Title: Sampling challenges in a study examining refugee resettlement

Version: 4 Date: 10 December 2010

Reviewer: Vanessa Johnston

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have done a really good job of a major revision to better address the core aim of this paper – that is, a description of the sampling and recruitment challenges when researching refugee health in developed countries like Australia and New Zealand. They should be commended for this. There is just one outstanding item that I believe needs to be addressed prior to publication:

Minor essential revision

1. The literature review should be moved either to the Background or the Methods section (the abstract suggests that the review will be considered in the methods). It does not make sense to see the literature review at the end of the paper.

Also, a quick Medline search revealed there have been more than nine quantitative studies published with these populations in developed countries, including some in Australia (see for example Steel Z., Chey T., Silove D., Marnane C., Bryant R.A., Van Ommeren M. (2009). Association of torture and other potentially traumatic events with mental health outcomes among populations exposed to mass conflict and displacement: A systematic review and meta-analysis. JAMA, 302(5), 537-549).

The authors either need to go down the road of doing a more thorough systematic review (i.e. defining search terms and inclusion criteria etc.) or for the purposes of this paper, they could discuss a ‘selection’ of studies which use a range of different sampling strategies. At the moment it reads as if a fairly broad search only located nine studies and this is somewhat misleading.

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

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'