Reviewer’s report

Title: Comparison of early-, late-, and non-participants in a school-based asthma management program for urban high school students

Version: 2 Date: 10 February 2011

Reviewer: Robert A Oster

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

None

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Abstract, line 5 of background, and any other occurrences in the manuscript – please change “data was” to “data were”.

2. Abstract – line 9 of results – please change “p’s<0.01” to “p-values < 0.01”.

3. Methods section – Please provide details of the actual randomization process (what method was used, what block size was used if block randomization was used, etc.).

4. Methods section, fourth paragraph – Please clearly define the outcome variables used in the logistic regression models.

5. Methods section, fourth paragraph – Were multiple variable analyses performed only for comparisons of participants versus non-participants (due to the small sample size of the late participants)?

6. Results section, second paragraph – Please specifically state why recruitment was re-opened in the fall of 2008. Was this done to increase the sample size or to obtain late participants for the comparisons (or both)?

7. Results section, third paragraph, third sentence – Is the mean age for participants significantly lower than that of non-participants? What is the p-value for this comparison?

8. Results section, third paragraph, fourth sentence – Please add the odds ratios, confidence intervals, and p-values for the three comparisons to this sentence.

9. Results section, third paragraph – fifth sentence – Please state all of the variables that are included in this multiple variable logistic regression model.

10. Results section, fourth paragraph, first sentence – Please add the p-values for the two comparisons to this sentence.

11. Results section, fifth paragraph – Please add the odds ratios, confidence
intervals, and p-values for these comparisons to the text.

12. Results section, sixth paragraph, third sentence – Was the single outlier included in or excluded from the statistical analyses? Why is this participant considered to be an outlier?

13. Results section, sixth paragraph, last sentence – Was the mean FTEs for the early participants compared to that of the late participants? If so, what was the result and is this result statistically significant?

Discretionary Revisions


2. Methods section – It would also be helpful to cite the text on logistic regression (“Applied Logistic Regression”) by Hosmer and Lemeshow (second edition, 2000).

3. Methods section – Version 9.1 of SAS is out of date, as the current version is 9.2. However, there is no need for the authors to rerun their analyses as the results yielded by the newer version should be identical to what the authors have reported in the manuscript.

4. Table 1 – It would be helpful to add p-values to Table 1, but doing so might make the table unwieldy due to the large number of comparisons that were performed.

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.