Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Systematic Techniques for Assisting Recruitment to Trials (START): study protocol for nested, randomised controlled trials

**Version:** 4 **Date:** 19 September 2014

**Reviewer:** Kelli Allen

**Reviewer’s report:**

This is a clearly written manuscript describing some interesting work to understand recruitment methods for clinical trials. I have only a couple of recommendations for minor essential revisions:

1. Ensure all abbreviations are spelled out before first use in the body of the manuscript (START, NRES, VM, REC, PCRN)

2. It would be helpful to describe a bit more about why the 2 specific interventions for Work Package 2 were selected. There is brief mention of this. However, it would be interesting to understand why the chosen interventions both focused on methods of providing information to participants, vs. how participants are initially identified, who approaches them, or other aspects of recruitment.

**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.