Reviewer's report

Title: Do Trialists Endorse Clinical Trial Registration? Survey of a PUBMED Sample.

Version: 2 Date: 17 May 2007

Reviewer: Sally Hopewell

Reviewer's report:

General:
Thank you for asking me to review this manuscript. This study sets out to evaluate trialists’ views about clinical trial registration and provides a much needed illustration of trialists opinions of trial registration and the WHO Trial Registry and Ottawa Statements initiatives.

The manuscript is clearly written and the methodology and results are well described. This study makes an important contribution to knowledge on trial registration and, as such, my comments are only minor.

Minor:

Abstract
Paragraph 4, line 15: There is a typo here “… endorsing registration. One third”.

Background
Page 5, line 5: “OS” should be written in full.

Material and methods:
Page 5: Did you limit your PubMed search to humans only or humans and animals?

Page 5: It would be interesting to know whether in fact all of the studies identified in the PubMed sample were indeed reports of clinical trials. Historically the NLM has not always indexed reports of randomized trials appropriately.

Page 6: In your pilot study you mention that five email were sent to each participant. Could you expand on the reason for this, for example were they testing different survey formats, reminder emails, or some thing else.

Results
Page 6: The response rate was 60%. Did you make any attempts to chase non-responders as this may have increased your survey response rate? You may be interested in the following Cochrane Methodology Review which looks at methods to increase survey respond rates (Edwards P, Roberts I, Clarke M, DiGuiseppi C, Pratap S, Wentz R, Kwan I, Cooper R. Methods to increase response rates to postal questionnaires. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2007, Issue 2. Art. No.: MR000008. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.MR000008.pub3).

Page 8: The reasons given for trialists concerns regarding trial registration are interesting and would prove very useful in exploring barriers to trial registration. You mention you had a wide range of comments from trialists, however, only a few are mentioned here. I think it would be useful to expand this.

Boxes:
Page 14: I think this information could be clearer if it were presented in a table rather than in the three boxes.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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.