Reviewer’s report

Title: An assessment of the efficacy of searching in biomedical databases beyond MEDLINE in identifying studies for a systematic review on ward closures as an infection control intervention to control outbreaks.

Version: 1 Date: 16 September 2014

Reviewer: Kath Wright

Reviewer’s report:

all Minor Essential Revisions

under Data collection methods there are a few additional clarifications that would be really helpful to include e.g

1) a rationale for the choice of databases used would be interesting

2) line 106 - I’m not familiar with the IndMED databases even though I’ve worked in information retrieval for many years so adding in a brief description would be useful

3) line 109 - “reference lists of relevant articles” - which relevant articles? are they the included studies?

4) line 111 - “two years of meeting abstracts” please report which 2 years e.g. 2011 - 2012

Results Section

line 150 to 153 I dont understand why CDSR was used when reviews were to be excluded. If the lists of studies included in the Cochrane Reviews were to be scanned could this be stated. If there was some other reason could that be given - I dont understand the explanation as it stands

Discussion session

The section about LILACS database was particularly interesting and noteworthy but this wasnt evident from the abstract. It would be good to refer to if space permits

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