**Reviewer's report**

**Title:** Acceptability of financial incentives and penalties for encouraging uptake of healthy behaviours: focus groups

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 22 November 2014

**Reviewer:** Marc Mitchell

**Reviewer's report:**

**Major**

1) How representative is this sample of the 'general population'? It is not clear. How many are overweight? How many smoke? This info would be very valuable. See notes made in methods/results

2) Much of the discussions surrounded around the effectiveness of incentives-for-health. Most assumed they were ineffective and thus unacceptable. Accumulating evidence suggests just the opposite. If this evidence had been presented, would it have changed opinions/conclusions? Worth flushing this out I think.

3) I really liked how the authors stratified groups by age/income - but they don't present the results in this way. Neither do they state (not explicitly anyway) that despite age, income differences opinions were similar. More on this would improve the paper I think.

4) Disc para 1 - "one of the first qualitative studies" - not really true. I provided a list of others using surveys/focus groups. These should be reflected upon more fully in Disc para 2-5

**Minor**

1) Intro para 3 - a growing number of studies have be published in this area - cite them!

2) Methods section light on details - refer to Braun & Clarke (2006) or another source to ensure adequate detail is provided.

3) Make mention of the new NHS policy to pay people to lose weight in Policy Implications section!

**Discretionary**

1) Intro para 2 - who's definition is this? cite?

2) Intro para 2 - list all the recent SRs examining the evidence base for incentives-for-health

3) Other notes made in the paper....

**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.