Reviewer’s report

Title: Improving the identification of priority populations to increase hepatitis B testing rates, 2012

Version: 0 Date: 27 Oct 2015

Reviewer: Kimberly Yousey-HIndes

Reviewer’s report:

The authors describe an intervention intended to increase hepatitis B testing rates among certain at-risk populations in Melbourne, Australia. The intervention is largely unsuccessful. Out of 338 patients targeted to receive outreach from a clinic at which the patient had previously received care, only 4 (1%) completed the desired intervention (a consultation with a GP for HBV testing or vaccination). As an outside observer, it seems that the intervention was poorly designed from the start (sample size calculations were skipped entirely) and continued to be plagued throughout the process (key stakeholders, i.e. the clinicians, were not included in the intervention). To their credit, the authors are upfront about many of the limitations of the intervention. One area of success that the authors highlight is identification of patients of Asian ethnicity. What the authors did identify was a list of patients with names that might indicate Asian origin. However, there was no confirmation of Asian identity by the patients themselves or their medical records. Aside from successful acquisition of data from three health clinics, there is very little to recommend here.

I think that the experience of these researchers could serve as a lesson to others in designing interventions. The manuscript needs minor editing before publication.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
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I am able to assess the statistics

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