Reviewer’s report

Title: The effect of commitment-making on weight loss and behaviour change in adults with obesity/overweight; a systematic review

Version: 0 Date: 25 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Simon Russell

Reviewer’s report:

Overall I found this study to be well conceived with sound methodology, and with an original and valuable contribution to the field. The manuscript was well written, logical and clear to understand. I would recommend for publication after minor revisions.

I have detailed some minor revisions below. A point of greater concern would be the extent to which meta-analyses can be used to draw meaningful conclusions given the low number of included studies and variations between studies; I believe this can be resolved by discussing the limitations of the analyses in more detail.

Page 2 line 30: full stop missing after Results.

Page 4 line 58: its not clear to me what 'quantity of tasks' means in this context.

Page 6 line 21: NICE reference in full, does this need to be included as a numbered reference.

Page 6 line 33: I would have imagined commitments typically took place at the beginning of interventions. If not, would this affect willingness to commit for some participants? Was the timing of the commitment in relation to the intervention considered?

Page 7 line 19: 'were' not 'are', and check tense throughout methods

Page 7 line 42: What was the justification for these five databases? Might searches of Cochrane and SCOPUS have been useful?

Page 9 line 5: Perhaps add a line justifying why a random effects model was used over fixed effects.

Page 10 line 5: Here and throughout, check capitals for consistency when referring to tables and figures (e.g. Appendix 1/Figure 1 and appendix 2/figure 2)

Page 12 line 18: 'Two' in italics

Page 13 line 34: Here and throughout, check consistency when reporting CIs. Sometimes use a comma between CIs, sometimes a hyphen, variable decimal places and sometimes report the unit of measurement (e.g. kgs) and sometimes do not.
Page 17 line 53: Perhaps reword this sentence for ease of understanding 'although it is unclear what it is about the group setting that is...'

Page 18 line 36: Check consistency of using numbers or words to express numbers (in this case 'six studies')

Page 21 line 29: I think the limitations sections needs to be expanded to include a more in depth acknowledgement about the limitations of the meta-analysis. There are wide CIs, this is acknowledged but the lower bound of the 2nd meta-analysis is zero, so a conservative approach based on these two studies might find no effect. The main meta-analysis includes studies from Japan and the USA which are culturally quite different, they also include studies of just females, just males and one mixed study, and are taken from studies ranging from 1991 to 2016. The number of studies would also not allow sensitivity analyses to consider some of these factors.

**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?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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