Reviewer’s report

Title: A protocol for a systematic review of non-randomised evaluations of strategies to increase participant retention to randomised controlled trials

Version: 0 Date: 12 Jan 2018

Reviewer: Reuben Ayeleke

Reviewer’s report:

Methods

* Authors should discuss the exclusion criteria after outcome measures; alternatively, authors can merge the exclusion criteria with relevant aspects of the inclusion criteria

* Authors can move the section 'Search Strategy' to after inclusion/exclusion criteria (but before Data Management) to allow for smooth flow of thoughts

Data synthesis

* There appears to be contradiction here: re outcome measures appear to be dichotomous in nature (no. of participants retained/total no. of participants ??) but authors are referring to thematic analysis here i.e. qualitative data. Please clarify

* Authors should clearly state how the stated outcome measures will be analysed, including measure of effects and unit of analysis

* If data will be combined in meta-analysis (which authors seem to be suggesting in line 53), this should be clearly stated with the likely effect model to be employed (fixed or random effect model)

* This section can be titled 'Data Analysis and Synthesis (if still applicable)

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