Reviewer’s report

Title: A cross-validation of the Provisional Diagnostic Instrument (PDI-4)

Version: 2 Date: 13 July 2012

Reviewer: Michael Von Korff

Reviewer’s report:

This paper assesses the concurrent validity of a brief screening scale (PDI-4) for identifying four psychological disorders: major depression; generalized anxiety disorder; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and bipolar I disorder. This paper assesses the PDI-4 in an independent sample, replicating prior work. The main finding was that the PDI-4 shows reasonable agreement with validating scales, but that there is considerable symptom overlap across the diagnostic categories. While there is an abundance of psychological screening scales, a brief scale covering these four disorders has value.

Major compulsory revisions - The rating scale is a screening scale that identifies persons with potential disorders. The paper should avoid the use of the term "provisional diagnoses". The amount of data presented is excessive. The confirmatory factor analysis and Table 2 should be dropped. Table 5 is also not essential. Figure 2 could also be dropped.

Minor essential revisions - The length of the manuscript should be reduced.

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:

No competing interests.