Reviewer’s report

Title: Implementing guidelines for depression on antidepressant prescribing in general practice: a quasi-experimental evaluation.

Version: 1 Date: 27 November 2013

Reviewer: caroline mitchell

Reviewer’s report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? YES

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? YES WELL DESCRIBED. A GOOD SECTION ON THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AS IT IS NOT RANDOMISED AND HENCE CONFOUNDING FACTORS MAY BIASE RESULTS: THE AUTHORS ACKNOWLEDGE THIS. WHILST I AGREE IT IS VERY CHALLENGING AND EXPENSIVE IN RESEARCH TERMS TO PERFORM, A RCT WOULD ENABLE A STRONGER STATEMENT OF CAUSE AND EFFECT USING THE MRC MODEL OF RCT EVALUATION OF COMPLEX INTERVENTIONS.

A SIGNIFICANT LIMITATION IS THE LACK OF PATIENT REPORTED OUTCOMES. DATA ABOUT THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPATING PRACTICES IN TERMS OF SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC STATUS OF THE POPULATION ETC WOULD BE HELPFUL. ALSO DID THE 'CONTROLS CHOSEN HAVE ACCESS TO LOW INTENSITY PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS AT ALL. A RCT WOULD HAVE ENABLED A USEFUL COST EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS.

3. Are the data sound? YES, HIGH QUALITY DATABASES WERE USED AND TRAINED RESEARCHERS EXTRACTED DATA IN A STANDARDISED FORMAT

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? YES, THIS IS A VERY WELL WRITTEN PAPER

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? YES

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? YES- SEE ABOVE- PATIENT REPORTED OUTCOMES WOULD HAVE BEEN HELPFUL

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
YES, GOOD SOUND LITERATURE REVIEW

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
YES

9. Is the writing acceptable?
YES

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

NO COI