Reviewer's report

Title: Screening and diagnosing depression in women visiting GPs' drop in clinic in primary health care

Version: 3 Date: 2 April 2008

Reviewer: DIANA DE RONCHI

Reviewer's report:

Notwithstanding changes made by the Authors in the introduction, results on prevalence, severity and socio-demographic features of depression among women visiting GP's drop in PHC remain poorly outstanding.

As I suggested, the Authors presented their paper as a replication study of the “two-stage screening procedure”, with the secondary aim to evaluate socio-demographic and clinical features of depressed vs. non-depressed patients, and this is more correct.

The Authors instead still underlined the importance of reported psychological symptoms to discriminate between depressed and non-depressed patients. Even if this is a result come out from the study, I suggest again more caution, given than 1/3 of depressed patients did not report psychological symptoms even if they are truly depressed. Furthermore, it is well known that a large proportion of depressed patients, particularly in the elderly, focus on somatic symptoms and this fact is a major problem in the recognition of depression.

On the other hand, is poorly stressed the fact that the “two-stage screening procedure” is more effective, with a low % of dropouts, when fully carried out by the GP instead than by a specialist in the second step.

Finally, we again suggest shortening the paper.