Reviewer's report

**Title:** Social inhibition as a mediator of neuroticism and depression in the elderly

**Version:** 4  **Date:** 18 July 2012

**Reviewer:** Jennifer Morse

**Reviewer's report:**

The authors have revised this manuscript and addressed many concerns. However, the way that they have responded to my concerns about the introduction and discussion, specifically the rationale for the study and the implications of the findings by pointing out that previous research has not focused on older adults and by citing additional work. This is fine but lackluster. That is, while it is important for each manuscript to focus on a previously unstudied area (social inhibition and depression haven't been examined in older adults), the authors can make an even bigger contribution by articulating why they think it is useful to examine this relation among older adults. For example, is there any particular reason to expect that social inhibition would play a greater or lesser role among older adults? If yes, why (perhaps connecting to theories of aging or development or descriptions of observed changes associated with aging). And similarly in the discussion, the authors have placed their findings into the context of previous research but have not taken the opportunity to articulate how their work moves the field forward. In my opinion these two parts of a manuscript (the rationale and the practical meaning or progress demonstrated) are the hardest parts to write, but in an exceptional paper, are the best parts to read.

Stylistically, I don’t think the authors should refer to themselves as “the authors” in the discussion. Use of first person is more common – We hypothesize, we observed, etc.

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests