Reviewer’s report

Title: Exploring the feasibility of a community-based strength training program for older people with depressive symptoms and its impact on depressive symptoms : a randomised controlled trial

Version: 3 Date: 6 October 2006

Reviewer: Peter Rabins

Reviewer’s report:

General

The abstract should state that the study was negative on the primary outcome, % with lower GDS score, although there was a trend for those in the intervention group to have greater improvement (p=.08). It should also state that the finding that those who adhered better had a better mood response was a post-hoc analysis and could be confounded.

There is a control group, but there is a question as to whether such a study could be ‘blinded.’ If the answer is that those administering the rating instruments could not be blinded, then this should be stated.

I do agree that this is a modest advance in knowledge that deserves publication as it could influence better designed trials, and does support further study of the effects of an exercise intervention on depression. the above comments could improve it further.