Reviewer's report

Title: The (cost) effectiveness of an online intervention for pregnant women with affective symptoms: protocol of a randomised controlled trial

Version: 3 Date: 30 April 2014

Reviewer: Thinh Nguyen

Reviewer's report:

General Comments:

This is a worthwhile study, the results of which will be important to the field. However, as the manuscript is a methods article, the authors need to ensure that there are sufficient details and rigid rigor to the methodology to allow replication.

Major compulsory revision:

1. The strength of this study is in having two sets of outcomes, one clinical and the other economic, i.e., cost saving. However, the economic analysis is quite vague and requires elaboration. There are references made to "indirect costs", "bootstrap replications", and "cost utility analysis" and incremental cost-effectiveness ratio (ICER), without explanations of what they mean, or exactly how the analyses are done. This is particularly important in addressing ways in which savings can be made for the intervention group compared to control. It may be helpful to cite previous work using the same sorts of analyses.

2. The manuscript will benefit from a study flow chart, to illustrate the process of selection and randomisation as well as timeline (T0, T1, T2 and T3).

3. The authors need to address confidentiality and how personal information collected will be safeguarded.

4. The reference is made to "trained coaches", what does this mean? How are the therapists trained? Reliability?

Minor essential revisions

1. The term "dysmaturity" was used on several occasions, without definition of what it means. Similarly what is meant by "affective dysregulation"? do the authors mean affective disorders such as depression?

2. The authors may want to discuss barriers to seeking treatment in perinatal psychopathology (i.e., too busy to attend appointments) and how internet intervention (can be done at anytime) may improve treatment uptake.

3. There are a number of typographical errors:

   Background:

   "both affective disorders"?
Instruments Suicidality:
"het" general practitioners
Quality of Life
The scale should be 0 to 10 rather than 0 to 1
Assessments:
to "registrate" symptoms of relapse"
Sample size and statistical analysis:
"models linear mixed models"

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests