Reviewer's report

Title: Acceptability of the Distress Thermometer and Problem List to community-based telephone cancer helpline operators, and cancer patients and carers.

Version: 3 Date: 19 August 2010

Reviewer: Joe Low

Reviewer's report:

I have read the new revised draft and am happy with some of the amendments made.

There are still some inconsistencies in the results section.

1) Section 'Callers' p.9. Should the first sentence read, 'Callers were a mixed cancer group of 375 cancer patients and 291 carers ....'? If not, what are the authors trying to say.

2) Suggestion: Change subtitle 'Predictors of use of the DT and PL' to 'Factors predicting operators' use of the DT and PL'.

3) In section 'Barriers to use of the DT and PL, I have the denominator value for patients = 35, not 32 and carers = 33, not 36. Ideally, it would be better to represent these in a table (but this is not necessary provided all your numbers cross-match. Please can you check your calculations again for pp9-11 to ensure that it is the case and that they are consistent, in particular, you may want to check 'incongruous reasons for calling'.

4) Can the percentages be rounded up to the nearest whole number? ie. 18.8% rounded to 19%.

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