Reviewer's report

Title: Suicide amongst psychiatric in-patients who abscond from the ward: a national clinical survey

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Reviewer: Mirjami Pelkonen

Reviewer's report:

Suicides comprise a major health problem worldwide, and in-patients with severe psychiatric disorders are at high risk for suicide. This study adds to the previous research giving detailed information of the characteristics and treatment received of those in-patients who have absconded from the ward before suicide. Non-compliance of psychiatric treatment among disordered patients is a serious problem, however, only some studies have focused on this problem. Thereby the findings of this study are very valuable. The sample size is large, and the aims are well defined. Discussion and conclusions are well balanced and adequately supported by the data. The limitations are well discussed. The manuscript is well written.

Minor Essential Revisions

Page 15, Table 1 Method of suicide..
CO poisoning, Carbon monoxide poisoning?

Discretionary Revisions

The authors mention some psychiatric treatment programmes (e.g. on page 7 the Care programme Approach), and a short description of this and other programmes (e.g. on page 8 MHA, on page 10 CCTV, swipe card system) should be given in an Appendix or in the text. This might be helpful for researchers as well for clinicians who are interested in in-patient ward programmes for at-risk in-patients.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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'