Reviewer’s report

**Title:** The study protocol of the Norwegian randomized controlled trial of electroconvulsive therapy in treatment resistant depression in bipolar disorder.

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 10 February 2010

**Reviewer:** George Kirov

**Reviewer’s report:**

This is a large and well-designed study which should answer some important questions. The protocol is useful for ECT researchers.

Discretionary Revisions

The authors should specify what the maintenance treatment will consist of, rather than refer the reader to the reference. They need to make it clearer that the ECT group will receive no antipsychotics, mood-stabilizers or antidepressants during the eCT course (I had some trouble making sure that this was the case). It is not clear if the control group will also have a wash-out phase. Lamotrigine needs to be increased gradually over several weeks, is this not going to make it problematic to fit in all the 4 steps of treatment for depression in a 6-weeks interval? This needs a bit of clarification, or changes.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance 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.