Reviewer's report

Title: Study of the Outcome of Suicide Attempts and the Potential Needs of the Individuals Involved

Version: 2 Date: 22 November 2009

Reviewer: Elizabeth Lillian Jeglic

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript examines the characteristics of individuals who made a suicide attempt and consequent visited an emergency department in Japan. These individuals were then (1) hospitalized in a critical care center; (2) hospitalized in the psychiatry ward or (3) not hospitalized and sent home. The goal of the manuscript was to examine characterizes of each of these three groups and to determine potential needs of the individual.

While this is an interesting topic with potentially important ramifications there are several issues with the manuscript in its current form that limit its impact.

Major Compulsory Revisions

There appears to be a fundamental problem with the goal of the manuscript. The authors propose to examine these three groups to determine individual patient needs. While it is interesting to compare the differences between groups, individual needs cannot be determined based upon their placement. There may be a multitude of reasons why an individual is placed in one setting and not another and thus it is not possible to generalize and use the information from this study to make any decisions. I believe if the project was framed differently – such that it was a general comparison of the three groups – the findings would be much more appropriate.

There are currently no references in the introduction – these need to be added.

On page 4 the authors state “In addition, for evaluable patients” – it was not clear what percentage of the sample was evaluated. One would assume those who were more medically serious would be non-evaluable, however this was not described. How many of the 1348 cases were evaluated?

In the results section, the authors do not state which results were statistically significant.

Also, the authors describe the psychiatric groups F3, F4 – however these have not been described anywhere – for those not familiar with diagnosis based on the ICD-10 this limits interpretation.

The authors may consider doing a MANOVA rather than a logistic regression to examine the differences between groups rather than to look at which factors predict placement.

The term parasuicide is no longer used in the suicide literature. The terms should be changed to deliberate self harm or self injurious behavior.
A lot of the information presented in the discussion section is new and should be presented in the introduction.

Some of the factors that are included in the models do not make sense. For example, for those hospitalized in the critical care center, the delivery of physical treatment and absence of psychotherapy predict placement within the critical care unit. This would make sense as these are individuals who are injured and thus they need physical treatment and they would not be well enough to receive therapy. I don’t think these variables are meaningful.

Minor Essential Revisions
The article could be proof read again as there are several sentences which are oddly phrased or not entirely make sense.
In the abstract only 2 of the three groups are discussed in the results section.
The number of participants, women and men etc.. should be presented in the text of the manuscript
Asukai’s classification is not described in the manuscript and many may not be familiar with it.
The conclusions in abstract are too general and could be more specific
I hope you find these recommendations helpful.

**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, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

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