Reviewer's report

**Title:** Patterns of treatment seeking behavior for mental illnesses in south west Ethiopia

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 3 May 2011

**Reviewer:** Lars Jacobsson

**Reviewer's report:**

The research question is interesting and the methods used adequate. The results are interesting and the discussion and conclusions are reasonable. The major problem is the presentation which needs a lot of editing. There are too many decimals in most of the numbers given in the text - eg 30.21% seek help of traditional healers.

The references given in the background 8-10 seems not appropriate??

The tables need some editing according to the requirements of the journal. Fig 1 is a bit difficult to understand - either explain in the text or revise in order to make it more easily understood.

The reference list should be made more complete eg ref nr 4,5,6,10.

Some findings might be commented on: Written informed consent was given by illiterate people (21%),

The mean monthly income seems to be rather high - students and farmers being the major participants.

Very few patients report psychotic disorders but at least 25% got a diagnosis of psychosis (schizophrenia and other psychosis).

There were quite a lot of suicide attempts (47%). Table 3 is very interesting indicating that the patients had a high symptomload.

The authors rightly talk about desirability bias - this could be discussed a bit more - the fact that as many as 99% believes that mental illness is curable is probably an example.

The findings indicate that the population is rather pragmatic in their help seeking behavior - that could also be commented a bit more.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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.