Reviewer's report

Title: The association between delusional-like experiences, and tobacco, alcohol or cannabis use: a nationwide population-based survey.

Version: 3 Date: 13 November 2011

Reviewer: Ian Kelleher

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This is a valuable paper showing associations between delusional experiences and (i) cannabis, (ii) alcohol and (iii) tobacco. The current paper extends established research by looking at age effects and reports a number of important findings in this regard, including that age of onset of use/abuse is an important predictor of DLEs. This is important because most awareness/public health strategies are directed at individuals in their late teens and early adulthood, when substance use is most prevalent but the findings of the current work suggest that, while prevalence may be relatively low in early adolescence, this may the most important age group for intervention to prevent morbidity. The work has a number of strengths including large participation numbers, detailed assessments of alcohol, smoking and cannabis use and the possibility to control for a number of potential confounding factors. The methods are appropriate. Limitations of the data are well addressed by the authors.

I have no major recommendations for changes but one minor point that the authors might like to consider is the possibility for interactions in their data. For example, we and others have previously shown that cannabis use interacts with other variables to predict psychotic experiences.(1, 2) Would it be possible to look at interactions between cannabis, tobacco and alcohol by stratifying to show the risk of DLEs in individuals across 4 levels of use (i.e., individuals who do not use any of the three substances, individuals who use 1 substance, individuals who use 2 substances and individuals who use all 3 substances)? This is not at all essential, just a suggestion (i.e., a discretionary revision).

References:

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