Reviewer’s report

Title: Factors affecting staff morale on inpatient mental health wards: a qualitative investigation

Version: 1 Date: 18 January 2011

Reviewer: Tilman Steinert

Reviewer’s report:

The staff morale research endeavour addresses a key resource in the mental health system. It is led by the understanding that building more and more outpatient services may be helpful for many purposes but has had considerable impact on the function of inpatient psychiatry which is still an important part of the system and needs attention and care. The mixed quantitative/qualitative study design is reasonable for this objective, the methods are sound, the sample is well selected. The results are appropriately presented with mixed summaries and quotations, the whole article is good to read and ends with concrete suggestions what could be done in day-to-day-practice. I highly appreciate this kind of sound research which can easily be communicated in everyday speech. I think the results are important for the whole community of hospital-based staff, essentially in the UK, but certainly beyond also. I find nearly nothing to criticize, one very minor point: P.4, 2nd par.: “Most previous…have been single case studies”: After that sentence I would expect three references, at least two. There is only one.

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'