Reviewer's report

Title: Psychological treatment of depressive symptoms in Chinese elderly inpatients with somatic diseases: A meta-analysis

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Reviewer: Michael Bloch

Reviewer's report:

This meta-analysis examines the efficacy of psychotherapeutic interventions for the treatment of depressed Chinese inpatients with medical comorbidity. They find a significant treatment effect and a large degree of heterogeneity between studies. The strength of this manuscript are (1) its transparent and high quality methodology, (2) use of literature that is largely unknown in english-language medicine. There are several changes that could be made in revision to improve this manuscript.

# the term “somatic disorders” should be replaced with “significant medical comorbidity”, the authors term may be confusing for many readers.

# The elimination of “outlier” studies to decrease heterogeneity is inappropriate. Instead it would be appriate to examine sources of heterogeneity in stratified subgroup analyses. Two obvious sources to look at in this dataset would be ..

1) comorbid medical condition
2) type of psychotherapy

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:

None