Reviewer's report

Title: Internet-based psychoeducation for bipolar disorder: feasibility, acceptability and impact.

Version: 2 Date: 9 July 2012

Reviewer: Richard Morriss

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My personal view is that papers such as these are essential for understanding how and why interventions work and how they are to be implemented. The results of the trial on which this current study was based were not particularly impressive but it was a small trial of an intervention approach which is used widely in practice. Therefore data exploring barriers and drivers to delivering this computer based intervention are likely to have a general importance.

The approach to this work is quite conventional and not especially innovative. The main methodological limitation is that the data collected was too sparse to theoretically sample respondents other than a few, generically starting and completing the intervention. There are indications in the data that mental state and privacy are important considerations and it would have been illuminating to have sampled on this basis. However, the topic is so novel that the data are valuable in their own right without the need for methodological innovation.

Minor essential revisions

In the abstract and page 5, I don't think there is such agreement in qualitative research to refer to a method as a "standard thematic analysis". It would be much more helpful if the authors summarised their approach to thematic analysis as constant comparison.

In the background it is important to refer to some more recent studies of group psychoeducation such as that conducted by Castle and colleagues in British Journal of Psychiatry.

The validity of these studies is improved if the backgrounds of all the research staff involved in the analysis was stated - ideally they would not all naturally agree and it is useful to demonstrate evidence of challenge in the data set. More information is required on who led the analysis, who read the manuscripts and how decisions were made on the analysis as it developed.

In the main methodology

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.