Reviewer’s report

Title: Long-term healthcare costs and functional outcomes associated with lack of remission in schizophrenia: a post-hoc analysis of a prospective observational study

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Reviewer: Mark Opler

Reviewer’s report:

This is an excellent and well-written paper covering an essential topic and providing valuable data. The authors accurately and clearly describe the importance of remission while differentiating remission in schizophrenia from recovery. The paper looks at various components of illness including functioning, qol, and symptom severity. Several other additional topics are raised such as victimization and violence, the role of ethnicity, work, and service utilization.

There are only a few very minor points where the authors could alter the paper for clarity and to further emphasize their important findings.

First, there is a new convention that several other researchers have adopted with respect to the Andreasen et al (2005) remission criteria in recent years, to notate the eight PANSS items as "PANSS-SR" for "PANSS Symptoms of Remission".

Next, the authors correctly point out the significant difference between recovery and remission. However, they reference only the SF-12 total score, suggesting/implying that this is a strong indicator of recovery. While their statement is eminently reasonable, they might want to examine the data somewhat more closely to support this statement. Minimally, if they are going to explore the recovery concept, they perhaps could reference the work of Lysaker and colleagues who have written quite extensively on the subject.

Finally, while the study they reference and describe is well done - and there is no need to provide extensive detail in the methods section beyond what they have already provided - I would still add a point or two about the representative nature of the sample in US-SCAP and the funding sources used to support that study.

Overall, this is an excellent publication with much to commend it.

Level of interest: An exceptional article

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'