Reviewer’s report

Title: The effect of family members' psycho-educational intervention on burden of caregivers and psychiatric symptoms of patients with schizophrenia in Shiraz, Southern of Iran

Version: 2 Date: 31 August 2011

Reviewer: Amanda Jones

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting article that could make a useful contribution to the field if the concerns listed below are addressed.

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS

2. More information is needed in the introduction and the methods sections about the intervention received by the experimental group. In particular:
   a. What theoretical framework was used to develop the intervention?
   b. What information is available about the fidelity of the intervention implementation? In other words, how do we know that the experimental participants received the intervention as intended?
   c. How much of the interventions did participants receive? The description of the psycho-educational program under "Design" indicates that not all experimental group participants went to all of the sessions. In addition, please state what is known (if anything) about the types of medications prescribed to participants in both groups and the level of adherence to medication regimens.

2. More information is needed to aid in interpretation of the results, including the following:
   a. Please provide some information about the constructs measured by the Family Burden Questionnaire, and provide some psychometrics for the BPRS and the Family Burden Questionnaire.
   b. The statistics cited in this draft provide evidence of the differences between the experimental and control groups, but they do not provide statistical evidence of change over time. Please add those statistics.
   c. The differences between the groups could be differences related to other factors, such as the types of medication prescribed and/or the participants' adherence to that medication. This needs to be stated more clearly. If possible, information about medication types and levels of adherence should be included in the statistical analyses.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS

1. In the methods section, please state whether participants received any incentive for participation, and state the incentive type and/or amount.
2. In Figure 1, graphing the results for both measures on the same graph (using the same Y-axis) seems odd. Please revise.

DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS

1. In the introduction, I think it would be useful to add a sentence or two comparing the expected Iranian response to family interventions to the responses of families from other cultures found in the literature.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.