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:** 3  **Date:** 5 December 2011

**Reviewer:** Nicholas Breitborde

**Reviewer's report:**

Major Compulsory Reviews

1) The lack of a review of past family psychoeducation studies in Iran in the Introduction is a noteworthy omission in this paper. The authors justify this omission in their response by stating “Most of the studies are not according to patient and family needs. So more focus is on needs assessment before implementing any intervention.” I am unclear as to how this point justifies the omission of this apparently relevant data from the introduction.

2) In the revision, the authors have attempted to distinguish their work from past studies of family psychoeducation in Iran by noting their focus on “patient and family needs.” Yet, it is unclear how they define “patient and family needs” and how these variables were targeted in the intervention or measured in the assessment. For example, what do the authors mean when they say that they administered a “need assessment” to participants? How is this need assessment-based psychoeducation different from other psychoeducation programs used in the past?

3) In my previous review, I asked the authors about how fidelity of the psychoeducational intervention was assessed. Although the authors have provided more information about the intervention, I see no information that addresses this question of fidelity.

4) In my previous review, I noted that the authors attempted to demonstrate the reliability of the Family Burden Questionnaires by reporting Cronbach’s alphas from other studies. This is not an appropriate demonstration of reliability as it tells us nothing about how the scales performed in the current sample. Reliability data with regard to the performance of these scales in the current sample would be most helpful. Additionally, no information with regard to the reliability of the BPRS is reported in the manuscript.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published
**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.