Reviewer's report

Title: Susceptibility (risk and protective) factors for in-patient violence and self-harm: prospective study of structured professional judgement instruments START and SAPROF, DUNDRUM-3 and DUNDRUM-4 in forensic mental health services.

Version: 1 Date: 21 June 2013

Reviewer: Danny Sullivan

Reviewer's report:

This is a well-constructed study which investigates a range of assessment tools which might be used in a secure forensic psychiatric hospital. The research questions are clearly-defined and seek to detail the elements of these instruments which might be effective in predicting various adverse outcomes.

The methods are described clearly. They are appropriate to investigate the research questions. The analysis explores a range of psychometric properties of the instruments which are relevant to establishing a basis for their use in this population, and investigates their usefulness to predict events of clinical relevance. The data appear sound and are set out comprehensively.

Discussion of the study and its findings elaborates clearly its limitations and the potential utility of the instruments. The writing is clear and strikes a balance between the necessity of explaining the methods of analysing the tools, and plain language discussion of the practical relevance of the findings.

This study will be of interest to those tasked with the clinical governance of secure psychiatric facilities, and further adds to study of the properties of a number of tools which are increasingly used in contemporary risk assessment and management planning.

Minor Essential Revisions
Minor typographical errors are noted: In the penultimate paragraph of the Background section, complimentary should read complementary; and once more in the first paragraph of the Discussion section.

Under the Results section, subheading internal consistency, lead should read led.

Discretionary Revisions
The Background section could do with minor rewriting to flow more clearly into the research question.

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

**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