Reviewer's report

Title: Internet-based interventions for eating disorders in adults: a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 9 October 2012

Reviewer: Ina Beintner

Reviewer's report:

In the review, authors aim to address two key questions: they seek evidence for the efficacy of internet-based interventions for binge eating and bulimia, and they are looking for factors associated with treatment effects. Due to the small number of RCTs in the subject, the authors reviewed the studies and abstained from conducting a meta-analysis. Overall, the research question is relevant to researchers in both eating disorder treatment as well as internet interventions. The manuscript was prepared diligently. However, several issues in the manuscript demand major revision.

1. You did not include one study by Carrard et al. in the review. Why?

2. The questions addressed in the review are buried in the method section and would be much more prominent at the end of the introduction.

3. In the method section, you did not report whether you calculated effect sizes yourselves, how exactly you calculated effect sizes (i.e. what standard deviation or pooled standard deviation you used to standardize mean differences) or if you took them directly from the original manuscripts (which could be disadvantageous due to different means of calculations used in original studies). Also, please indicate if and how you adjusted effect sizes for sample size.

4. You should explain why you preferred effects for completer samples over ITT effects. If only completer data is provided in the original manuscripts, ITT effects can be estimated by assuming a zero effect for study dropouts (dITT=dCompleter*NCompleter/NITT).

5. When means and standard deviations are not available, Cohens d can be estimated from F-values (for a German instruction, see Rustenbach, 2003, p. 95). This should be done for data from Robinson and Serfaty.

6. Please introduce all outcomes in the method section. Also, I would advise to include binge eating frequencies and abstinence rates (defined as total absence of binge eating over a set period of time) as main outcomes and EDI/EDE-Q.
subscales as secondary outcomes.

7. Study dropout (i.e. failure to attend post treatment assessment) and treatment dropout (i.e. failure to complete treatment) should be clearly distinguished and analyzed separately from each other.

8. Please check table 2a for missing information on mean age

9. Both the results section and the discussion are confusing and would benefit from a clearer structure and some reduction of information that can be obtained from the tables. In the results section, always specify which EDI/EDE-Q subscales you are referring to and maybe group subscales based on what they measure rather than what questionnaire they come from.

10. The whole manuscript would benefit from editing, preferably by a native speaker.

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

**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