Reviewer's report

Title: Axis-I Comorbidity is linked to prospective Instability of Diagnoses within Eating Disorders

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Reviewer: Marija Anderluh

Reviewer's report:

This paper presents an extension of the previously published study presenting the data on the diagnostic switch in patients with eating disorders, prospectively followed up for 30 months.

1. Although the paper is based on an interesting research question - which factors are responsible for the diagnostic crossover and unstable diagnostic course of eating disorders, the data describing the study sample are insufficient for a solid conclusion:
   - diagnostic subtypes as determined in the DSM-IV (e.g. restricting or binge/purging anorexia) would add important information on the observed patterns of diagnostic crossovers, as seen in the clinical experience and previous research
   - data on duration of an eating disorder before entering the -relatively short observational study is missing- it is well documented that the rate of the crossover is highest during the first three years in the course of an eating disorder. Several diagnostic switches that actually happened in the observed cases maybe not be detected in the study. That diversity of the sample observed is likely among the important reasons for less conclusive data.

2. it would be interesting to know at which point in the study the comorbidity was assessed - and whether the observed axes I disorders were present before or after the onset of an ED (a trait or state factors?)

3. The paper would benefit from more comprehensive presentation of the patterns of diagnostic crossovers and their frequency, given the fact suggested in the previous studies that particular factors might be responsible for particular switches.

4. Although the authors mention in the limitations that psychiatric comorbidities of axis II were assessed in the paper instead of personality factors, this presents a crucial drawback of the current study - given that personality factors have been shown already to be very important for the lifetime stability of eating disorders.

5. The paper does not firmly stands on or extends the previous work on the topic. The reference to their previous paper does not give the rationality for the differences reported on the role of anxiety disorders in the crossover of ED. The paper does not even cite the paper by Anderluh and colleagues (2008) that
explored the same topic in the context of the role of personality traits.

4. All stated above very likely contributes to the low statistical significance of the presented results and undermines the presented conclusion.

5. The paper is extremely short, both introduction and especially discussion would benefit from a more comprehensive approach.

Major Compulsory Revisions

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

**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.