Reviewer's report

Title: Study protocol Efficacy of immediate patient feedback in emergency psychiatry: A randomized controlled trial in a Crisis Intervention & Brief Therapy Team

Version: 2 Date: 22 July 2013

Reviewer: Bruce Wampold

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

The major limitation of the manuscript is that it contains a proposed study rather than the results of a completed study. Occasionally, reporting a design is information if the design is unusual or innovative, in some important way. In the present case the primary way that this study differs from previous studies is the context of the study, namely that it is being conducted in crisis services. The design itself does not differ in important ways from previous feedback trials.

The strengths of the study are the use of outcome measures other than that used for feedback and the application of feedback to the crises services context.

Many of the issues raised earlier have been addressed, although at times in a superficial way. The nested nature of the data is now recognized. However, the nature of the analysis continues to be described superficially. A three level multilevel model is proposed, but the intricacies of the model are not discussed. How will the model be constructed? What covariance structure will be used (or how will it be determined what structure will be used)? What random effects will be included (slopes as well as intercepts?)? What coefficients of the model will provide tests of hypotheses? Therapist effects within feedback studies are particularly interesting but they are not discussed to any degree. The mediation model with alliance is particularly interesting, but much more needs to be said about how this will be tested within a mediational framework. Suppose that a feedback effect is found, as expected, how will alliance as a mediator be tested?

The writing is fairly redundant and could be much more succinct. For example, much of the discussion of the alliance is unneeded to make the case for the study. The methods section is confusing because procedures, psychometrics and design do not form distinct sections. For example, psychometric information about the ORS and SRS are described under interventions. But then later more information about the instruments and how they are used is described under “randomization and time points.” And then again, in the instrument section contains more information about instruments.

Minor Essential Revisions

Article needs to be significantly shortened and made more concise.

Discretionary Revision
None

**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:**

No competing interests