Author's response to reviews

Title: Guided online treatment in routine mental health care: uptake, drop-out and effects

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear editors,

We hereby resubmit our manuscript for publication in your Journal. The original title was “Guided Online Treatment for Mental Health Problems: an Implementation Study” which we changed for “Guided online treatment in routine mental health care: uptake, drop-out and effects”.

In response to the editors comment received on 15-02-2012 we would like to state that we did not obtain a trail registration number because this study is not a clinical trial, but an observational study in routine mental health care. From numerous randomized trials we know that E-mental health is a (cost)effective tool in mental health care. However, there are few studies which describe how acceptable E-mental health is to the patients in routine mental health care (what is the uptake and drop-out?) and we also do not know if the results obtained in RCTs can be replicated in routine care. That is the main focus of the current study. We changed the title of the study to make this more clear.

The editor furthermore states that he / she thinks that ethical approval would be required because the study involves an intervention. However, as stated before, this study is not a randomized trial. It describes what happens in routine care. In other words, without this research project patients still had the choice to either start directly with guided online treatment or to wait on a waiting list. The study just observed what the choices were, but did not intervene. Therefore, the study is not subjected to the Dutch law on ethical approval (WMO).

We hope that our answers are clear and you will consider this manuscript for publication.

Yours sincerely,

Robin Kenter, MSc
On behalf of all the authors