Reviewer's report

Title: First Episode of Psychosis and Migration in Italy (PEP_ITA Migration): a study in the Italian Mental Health Services

Version: 5 Date: 19 November 2013

Reviewer: Kevin D Morgan

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The study proposed is one of importance and should contribute to the understanding of the elevated risk factors for psychosis in migrant and ethnic minority groups. The proposal described in the manuscript provides a good outline of the study as a whole including its rationale, aims and methodology. There are some details regarding the methodology however that may have been omitted or if not omitted, are aspects of the study methodology that should be addressed or at least referred to, in the report.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) As one of the principal aims of the study is to assess the incidence of psychosis in migrants in Italy it would be helpful if the report could clarify how the population at risk (i.e. migrants living in Italy) has been calculated or estimated. (The figure of 10% of the total population in the catchment area is mentioned but without specifying how this percentage has been reached).

2) The report states that a case-control study on FEP patients in the same catchment area during the same data collection period will be conducted. It would be helpful if the criteria upon which the native FEP patients will be selected is described e.g. will it be based on consecutive admission to designated hospitals or outpatient clinics etc? Will they be matched to the migrant FEP patients and if so, on what basis? The projected number of native FEP patients is also not referred to. This would be useful to know.

3) In relation to the above, for a study that is investigating risk factors for psychosis in migrants, a case-control study of migrants who do not develop psychosis would be beneficial if they were recruited in the same catchment areas at the same period of data collection. While this is not essential to implement, the report would be enhanced by consideration of such a strategy.

4) For the FEP migrant patients the inclusion criteria should specify what constitutes migrant status e.g. is there a minimum period of residency?

5) In similar incidence studies a strategy is usually put in place to estimate the accuracy of the incidence rate reported. Typically, a 'leakage' study is conducted after 12 or 24 months of the primary data collection to assess how many FEP may have been 'missed' by the researchers during the critical data collection period. It would be helpful to know if such a leakage study or alternative
approach has been planned.

Minor Essential Revisions
There are several typographical and grammatical errors in the manuscript. I have not listed them here but would be happy to provided the details if required.

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**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