Reviewer's report

Title: Results of a pilot randomised controlled trial to measure the clinical and cost effectiveness of peer support in increasing hope and quality of life in mental health patients discharged from hospital in the UK

Version: Date: 20 November 2013

Reviewer: Aino Mattila

Reviewer's report:

This is quite a meticulous attempt to analyze the benefits of peer support after discharge from mental hospital. However, as the authors state in the Discussion section, “this pilot was simply not sufficiently powered to detect an effect”. From the 134 eligible patients, 46 (34.3%) were recruited. Of these, 15 (36.2% of the total sample OR 11.2% of the eligible patients) provided T2 data. This is quite problematic as it is quite difficult to generalize the findings. So, one wonders if this report is to be published at all, although the authors emphasize the pilot nature of the paper.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Abstract, Methods: It should be mentioned here that PS was offered in addition to AUC otherwise it seems as if it were an alternative to CAU.

2. Procedure: The other condition is PS and CAU while the other one is CAU.

3. Data collection and analysis: Is it really statistically meaningful to calculate means and confidence intervals for such small samples (T2 n=6 and n=9)?

4. Why does Table 2 appear before Table 1 in the text?

5. Results; Recruitment and follow-up: Please move this section to the Methods. The reader keeps wondering about the sizes of the groups if they are not given in the Methods.

6. PSW-peer interactions: The min and max numbers as well as the median (with IQR) of the face-to-face contacts would be nice here. What does it mean that the PSWs “made attempts to contact their peer on three occasions”?

7. Results on the key outcomes: The differences between the three time points within the two conditions were analyzed. How about the differences between the two conditions at different time points – why were these not analyzed? In the Discussion section the author claim that “no significant differences were found between those receiving peer support and those receiving care-as-usual…” even though they provide no between-group comparisons.

8. EQ5D EuroQoL Quality of Life Scale (EQ5D), second paragraph: In which direction was the difference for the CAU condition? Please specify. And were
there differences between the two groups?

9. The guidance for interpreting figures 2 to 5 should be given in the Results section, not in the Discussion as otherwise the figures are not very informative to those who are not familiar with this kind of analyzes.

**Level of interest:** An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.