Reviewer's report

Title: Cortical Thickness in Youth with Major Depressive Disorder

Version: 3
Date: 17 January 2014

Reviewer: Kathryn R. Cullen

Reviewer's report:

The revised manuscript has addressed many of the reviewer comments, and the changes were helpful for the overall improvement. I still have a couple of minor essential revisions.

1. Thank you for clarifying that the approach was to focus on 2 regions, the DLPFC and the ACC. Please state this not only in the methods but also in the aims of the paper.

2. The tricky thing about this paper is that FreeSurfer does not have a region called DLPFC, so the authors are obliged to use the MFG, and say that this is "an aspect of the DLPFC". It's unfortunately a bit clumsy. I suggest using DLPFC in the introduction and discussion, as they have, and within the methods and results, explain once that MFG is the best available ROI within FreeSurfer that approximates DLPFC, and then just refer to MFG within those two sections.

3. FreeSurfer has two ACC regions, rostral and caudal, I think the authors used caudal but it is not always clear. Please state this clearly in the methods, which exact regions were used in the analysis.

4. Clarify that you used 4 regions: right and left caudal ACC, right and left MFG. This would perhaps help readers understand how you came up with the p<0.01 threshold.

5. Since you have decided to focus only on ACC and DLPFC/MFG, please delete the results about precentral and isthmus.

6. Throughout the introduction and discussion, since the findings in this paper contrast with other reports, it would be good to always say the direction of findings; instead of saying 'differences', please state thicker or thinner, larger or smaller. Also please include left and right specifiers when possible.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.