Reviewer's report

Title: Health service use among individuals with illegal drug use disorders: the role of comorbid common psychiatric disorders.

Version: 1 Date: 27 May 2013

Reviewer: Morten Hesse

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions:
None

Minor compulsory revisions:

The term "health service use" does not really reflect the item that is the outcome variable. I doubt if many Narcotics Anonymous attendants or health professionals would agree that an NA/AA meeting is a health service. Similarly, patients who have sought a social worker or a counsellor in a community program are unlikely to consider this health services. Further, health services is a term that is generally used to describe a much broader range of services than those that pertain to substance use disorders. Please consider a term that better reflects the item.

Under methods: Please state if lifetime disorder must be confirmed at both time points, or (as I suspect is the case) must only be confirmed at one time point. In relation to the discussion of table 2, the authors state that 31.4% reported treatment. However, this term may again be slightly misleading, as this may include a small number who simply visited an emergency room.

Under health care services, methods: "illegal drug use disorder without comorbidity" should be restated to reflect the fact that according to other reports from NESARC, nearly all respondents with drug use disorder had some comorbidity, if personality disorders and ADHD were included. Consider rephrasing.

Under statistical analyses: please state if you used the sampling weights from the survey for the regression analyses.

Discretionary revision

With a substantial part of the discussion devoted to health care systems, it would be interesting to know if the proportions receiving and needing treatment varied considerably between units that have different policies in terms of accessibility and payment for services. A candidate could be the state in which the respondent is living, but differences between rural/urban areas could also be important. Further, if some types of services are only available for those with some kind of private insurance, this could also be controlled for (if available in
NESARC).

**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.