Reviewer's report

Title: Experiences in applying skills learned in a Mental Health First Aid training course: a qualitative study of participants' stories

Version: 1 Date: 2 July 2005

Reviewer: Christoph Lauber

Reviewer's report:

General

This paper presents qualitative data on the effects of a training course in mental health first aid. The first author and his co-workers evaluated this course previously. The respective results of these quantitative analyses are published (mainly in BMC Psychiatry).

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. I would suggest to more use tables in this paper. Especially the results section is very long. Thus, the reader not familiar with the topic may quickly lose the overview. The same holds true for the method section where the questions could be listed in a table. This approach would help to more structure and to shorten the manuscript.

2. 64.3% of the 146 participants who were approached finally completed the questionnaire. I wonder whether there are differences in terms of sociodemography or performance in and feedback to the MHFA course between the participants and the non-participants.

3. This leads to another question: can you link data from the MHFA course and the answers given in the present survey on an individual level? This would probably lead to answer the question to whom in terms of profession, age, education etc. such an MHFA course can be recommended. It would probably also clarify who of the participants did not participate in this survey.

4. The reference list is a bit uniform as with one exception it only refers to papers writing by the first author and his team.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

In the sample description you wrote that the questionnaires were completed in November-January 2004. I think it is November 2004-January 2005.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

none

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the
major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.