Reviewer's report

Title: Post-traumatic stress disorder following patient assaults among staff members of mental health hospitals: a prospective study

Version: 1  Date: 20 February 2006

Reviewer: Richard Whittington

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting and informative study on an under-researched topic. The method is clearly explained and appropriate to the research question. Some important data on the rates of PTSD are provided and should alert researchers and employers to the nature of the problems which need to be addressed.

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

None

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

None

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
1. p5: One participant is reported to have been re-assaulted after follow-up interview 1. Did this occur with any other participants?
2. p6: The second hypothesis for non-participation (i.e. relatively high PTSD) is supported by the significantly higher sickness absence level amongst non-participants(p5). This could be mentioned and interpreted and discussed a little.
3. The final line of the conclusion does not necessarily follow logically from the actual study. This should be considered a speculation rather than a conclusion and some specific ideas for effective measures suggested.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
The first author is a co-author and co-editor with me on two publications.