Reviewer's report

Title: Mental health consultations in a prison population: a descriptive study

Version: 2 Date: 21 April 2006

Reviewer: Ron Manderscheid

Reviewer's report:

General

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

I have re-reviewed this manuscript. As with the previous draft, the authors still insist in drawing unwarranted conclusions about the quality of the services provided without having any person-specific outcomes information. To do this is inappropriate for the reasons noted earlier: (1) The authors have asked providers if services are adequate and effective (Would you actually expect providers who are paid for these services to say otherwise?); (2) What may apply at a facility level may not apply at the person level (This is the fallacy of aggregation). The bottom line is that the authors are trying to make much more of this study than is warranted. I cannot recommend approval of the revision. I am, however, willing to approve this as a descriptive study that does not draw conclusions about quality of services.

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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)

Authors have still failed to include major references from the United States, as published in the Mental Health, United States series. This series contains studies of Federal, State, local, and juvenile facilities.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

No other comments.

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

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests.