Reviewer’s report

Title: Mammography stages of change in middle-aged women with schizophrenia: An exploratory analysis

Version: 1 Date: 7 July 2006

Reviewer: Faith B Dickerson

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)

The authors have made improvements to the manuscript based on the reviewer critiques. The issue of mammography in older women with schizophrenia is an important one, as underutilization of preventive health care among persons with schizophrenia is a problem and may contribute to the reduced health status and increased mortality in this population. Comments on the revised manuscript:

1. The small sample size remains a major limitation of this study. With an n of 46, of whom 28% (n=13?) were under the age of 50, that leaves n=33 in the age range for which mammography is clearly indicated.

2. The sample frame remains unclear. Psychiatrially and medically stable â€“ how was this determined?

3. Table 1 is confusing because the % of women receiving annual mammography (the last 2 rows) is split by age, but the numerator/denominator are not provided (the column headlines are for the total group). Furthermore, it is not clear how the statement, â€“ 37% of the women with scz reported having an annual mammography â€“ (page 10) was derived; the % given in the discussion is 41.3%. Also, it is unclear how this small number of women, with a large % under age 50, could be compared with the rate in the general population.

4. Given the results, it does not seem warranted to conclude that â€“ data from this study also supported the second hypothesis â€“ (page 12) as knowledge and benefits did not differ between groups and the difference on perceived barriers was also not statistically significant. The results are not fully consistent with the authorsâ€™ interpretations. A larger sample size of women over the age of 50 is needed to better address the study aims.

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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)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Reject because scientifically unsound

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.