Reviewer’s report

Title: Even more suicide attempts in clinical trials with paroxetine randomised against placebo.

Version: 1 Date: 21 August 2006

Reviewer: Toshiaki A Furukawa

Reviewer’s report:

General

The authors re-analysed the data on paroxetine and suicidality with the same methodology but with 19 studies (instead of 16 in their original paper) that were mentioned in the Briefing Document recently issued by the company.

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

None

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

1. Hyperlinks to references 4 and 5 cannot be opened. Where are they gone? The latter is a GSK document so the company may wish to do whatever they like with it, but if so, we still would like to see what they said. The former should be a comment on the author’s prior publication and should be accessible. What happened?
2. If these are inaccessible, then the authors may wish to cite them in greater length in the current correspondence, so that the readers will know better what interactions took place.
3. In the text, the authors may wish to state when the GSK Briefing Document was issued.
4. I am still at a loss as to what the following technical terms mean: “intensity per year” and “density estimation.” I should have pointed this out for the authors’ first publication but allow me to belatedly ask the authors to clarify them.
5. The authors may also wish to explain, in lay terms, what the posterior probability means. As I understand it, it means that we can be 98% sure that paroxetine increases suicidal attempts. Am I correct?

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Which journal?: Appropriate or potentially appropriate for BMC Medicine: an article of importance in its field

What next?: Accept for publication in BMC Medicine after minor essential revisions

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I have received research funding and fees for speaking from the following pharmaceutical and related companies:
Astellas
Dai-ichi Isotope
Dai-Nippon Sumitomo
Eisai
Eli Lilly
Glaxo-Smith-Kline
Janssen
Meiji
Organon
Otsuka
Pfizer
Tsumura
Yoshitomi
Zelia