Reviewer's report

Title: A Controlled Trial of the Litebook Light-Emitting Diode (LED) Light Therapy Device for Treatment of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Version: 1 Date: 26 April 2007

Reviewer: Dietmar Winkler

Reviewer's report:

General

This is a study investigating the efficacy and tolerability of a specific light therapy device, the Litebook LED treatment device, in a sample of patients with seasonal affective disorder (SAD). The study has been conducted in a fairly small sample of 26 patients by use of a randomized placebo-controlled methodology. The authors have used an inactivated negative ion generator as a placebo condition, which is until now by far the best approach to solve the dilemma of a placebo for light therapy studies. The study is an important contribution to the development of new antidepressant methods in the field of SAD and should be considered for publication after some minor modifications.

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Minor Essential Revisions:

• The necessity of further non-inferiority studies of the Litebook LED treatment device vs. bright light therapy should be mentioned in the discussion section.

• The need for additional clinical trials of longer duration (8 weeks in most acute phase studies in depression) should be discussed.

• Page 10: p-values should be provided for the correlation coefficients.

• Page 10: “There was no significant correlation between pre-treatment MEQ scores and…”: statistical values should be given for this statement.

• The information contained in figure 2 can easily be described in the text.

• Some of the information given in table 1 is redundant with figure 1. The rate of subjects in remission could also be graphically depicted e.g. in a survival plot.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.