Reviewer’s report

Title: Sensitivity and specificity of the Major Depression Inventory in outpatients

Version: 1 Date: 10 April 2007

Reviewer: Per Bech

Reviewer’s report:

General

This is a very interesting study. However, the authors should consider the following issues:

On page 3, line 6 from the bottom, the authors correctly say that the number of studies with the Major Depression Inventory (MDI) has been limited to psychometric-oriented investigations. Therefore, for diagnostic classification, studies with mixed groups of outpatients are needed to confirm the validity and applicability of the scale.

The study the authors have performed is such a naturalistic investigation including 258 outpatients in mental health care.

On page 4, line 12 from the top, the authors have stated that 90 patients did not fill in the MDI and 18 patients not “completely”. The authors should more clearly describe why the patients had not filled in the scale. Apparently, 18 patients had not answered all 12 questions. Please specify. In this context it is important to know the response rate for the two SCL subscales (depression and anxiety). On page 6, only the SCL depression scale is described; please also make a short description of the SCL anxiety scale.

On page 3, line 13 from the top, the authors say that the MDI items are rated on a five-point scale. Actually, it is a six-point scale from 0-5, i.e. six categories.

On page 8, line 5 from the bottom, the authors should call the correlation coefficient of 0.24 for only statistically significant, because this numerically very low coefficient explains approximately 5% of the variance between MDI and the age of the patients.

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

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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)