Reviewer's report

Title: The assessment of depression awareness and help-seeking behaviour: experiences with the International Depression Literacy Survey.

Version: Date: 31 May 2007

Reviewer: Barbara Lay

Reviewer's report:

General

The revised paper has been substantially improved and the investigators have qualified their results. However, some reservations remain:

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

The study pursues the objective to develop a screening instrument that is sensitive to mental health training and culture effects. Considering this aim, the size of the comparison group representing Australian College students is very small (n<=38) and it is difficult to recognize what this group stands for. Moreover, the authors are not focusing on a few crucial measures but are examining a broad battery of variables which exceeds the sample size many times over.

Given the limitations arising from the sampling method, the sample size and the fact that there was no control for any confounder, I would still advocate a more cautious diction in drawing conclusions from these results. At this point the degree of discriminant validity on item- or section level has not yet been established.

Therefore, I still feel that the discussion continues to need attention. The authors should acknowledge that further work is needed before one may generalize to other samples, and before the IDLS can be regarded as "well suited for use in a wider international context" (Abstract p. 2; Conclusions p. 17).

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

- Table legends: It is absolutely unusual to mark the results that are "(a) Not significant following Bonferroni correction". In my view the results are sufficiently described by stating "Adjusted alpha = xy".

- On page 9, the authors state "Where appropriate, Bonferroni corrections were applied ... ". I cannot see why such an %-correction should not be appropriate for the comparisons given in table 4, for instance. The table footnotes should be rechecked.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.