Reviewer's report

Title: The Improved Clinical Global Impression Scale (iCGI): development and validation in depression

Version: 1 Date: 25 June 2006

Reviewer: Yvonne Forsell

Reviewer's report:

General
This report is of interest for clinical research in depression since the method used can reduce the number of participants that has to be included. However, if the method always needs four psychiatrists for the ratings this might cause practical problems. There is advantages to use methods that can be used in population based studies as well. It is surprisingly that the improved response pattern not have any effect.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
Since the improved response pattern did not have any effect the focus needs to be more on the improvement of the CGI that had effect. Decrease the method section concerning the response pattern and extend the other parts. This would make the paper more easy to read.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
Excuse my ignorance but I do not really understand the figures with the spherical representation. There might be other readers that also needs some explanation of this in the result section. Especially since I believe that those who are interested in this paper are psychiatrists involved in clinical research. Delphi processes is a well-recognized group process in social sciences but not widely used in medical science. There might be other readers that do not understand this procedure and needs some explanation.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
Reference 14-18 are all difficult to read for a person that do not understand French. Could You find an English reference of the phenomenological concepts in psychiatry?

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.