Reviewer's report

Title: Can pill placebo augment cognitive-behavior therapy for panic disorder?

Version: 2 Date: 30 October 2007

Reviewer: Andrew Baillie

Reviewer’s report:

General

The authors have accounted for the major issues I raised earlier. The paper is sound in its current form but remains rather brief.

I disagree with the authors about the importance of difficulties in combining different continuous self-report measures. There is a long tradition of pooling results from different measures in meta-analysis by converting results to effect sizes to remove some measurement effects. The differences in the definitions of response for the three studies are likely to be as different as between self-report measures used. Heterogeneity in effect sizes that may be caused by different measures can also be empirically evaluated. I think that excluding continuous measures is a lost opportunity to make this paper more substantial.

---------------------------------------------------------------

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

---------------------------------------------------------------

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

---------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Reject because too small an advance to publish

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 have been trained as a cognitive behavior therapist and have specialized in the
treatment of panic disorder. More than five years ago I have received speaker
honorariums for providing continuing medical education from Glaxo Smith Kline
and its predecessors. I declare that I have no other competing interests.