Reviewer's report

Title: Reliability and validity of the Thai version of the PHQ-9

Version: 1 Date: 30 October 2007

Reviewer: Antonio Lobo

Reviewer's report:

General
The article might be quite appropriate, since it tries to document the reliability and validity of a well known instrument, the PHQ-9, in a new cultural setting. This instrument, in principle might be relevant in the armamentarium of screening instruments in Thailand. The sample is quite important, and the design is careful in a number of aspects, including the translation process. However I am concerned about several issues:

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

1. Clarity of the manuscript is an issue. For example, “five consecutive patients were invited…” (page 6, 2nd paragraph); this should be clarified.

2. It is not clear how the diagnosis of major depression was performed (page 7, 3rd paragraph and page 10, 2nd paragraph).

3. “Validity analysis” (page 10, 2nd paragraph). The data showing that mean scores in PHQ-9 are higher in “major depressions” than in non-depressed patients, it is not enough to support the validity.

4. “PHQ-9 as a criterion-based measure” (page 10, 3rd paragraph). The authors should clarify this paragraph. It is not clear what is the “gold standard” to document the sensitivity, etc., of the PHQ-9.

5. The sensitivity documented in this paragraph (0.53) is low for screening instruments, I believe the comments in the discussion section are insufficient.

6. PHQ-9 as a severity measure (page 11, 1st paragraph). What is the gold standard to calculate the ROC curve here?

7. A positive predictive value of 0.21 is quite low (page 11, 1st paragraph).

8. On the bases of these comments, I do not feel satisfied that the conclusions in the Abstract are well substantiated. Furthermore, I think there are no data to support the statement that this version of the PHQ-9 “could be a valuable tool for … and monitoring of depression in this population”.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
The manuscript would improve if the Methods section is clearly distinguished from the Results section.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**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:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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