Reviewers report

Title: The association between psychiatric diagnosis and violent re-offending in adult offenders in the community

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Reviewer: Edle Ravndal

Reviewers report:

This is a well written paper in a field where still new research is needed. Previous research in the area is well presented and commented on with special relevance to the current study. The questions posed by the authors are well defined as are the methods used in order to answer these questions. The study has several strengths: a comparison group with no psychiatric disorder at baseline is included, there is a prolonged follow-up of the material, and the sample is community-based.

Discretionary Revisions:

The data seem sound, but a section in Methods is lacking discussing the quality of the data. Nothing is said in the paper concerning validy and reliability of the data from the different national registers used in the study. For example how good is the information from the crime register, and how valid are the psychiatric diagnosis when no diagnostic instruments have been used - just clinical interviews? We know from other studies that such data can be questioned, and a discussion of these issues should be included either under Methods, or perhaps even better, in the discussion part.

The final main section in the paper is called Conclusions (page 10). A better heading would be Discussion. Also the subtitles in this main section are not neccessary. I would prefer that the implications of the findings should be stated at the end of the Discussion, and before the final conclusions which are now written at the top of page 13 ("In summary, we found........"). Otherwise the discussion and conclusions are well balanced and supported by the data.

Limitations of the work is clearly stated, but as mentioned above I miss the discussion around the quality of the data.

The title and the abstract accurately convey what has been found. The writing and language is excellent.

Altogether an interesting paper that should be published, but minor revisions should be made.

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