Reviewer’s report

Title: The Self-reported Montgomery-Asberg Depression Rating Scale is a useful evaluative tool in Major Depressive Disorder

Version: 2 Date: 17 December 2008

Reviewer: Kenneth Kobak

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have addressed the concerns from my previous review. Specifically, they have 1) clarified that the self-report version always went first, 2) In the discussion, mentioned that the scales may not be equivalent, and 3) included citations to previous work on other self-report versions of the MADRS and HAMD, and other scales (QUIDS). Just a few more comments below.

- Major Compulsory Revisions
  none

- Minor Essential Revisions
  The sentence on page 10 re: the higher correlation with similar scales is worded backwards. It makes their case more strongly if it were worded to read “The more similar the scales, the higher the level of correlation...(not ‘the higher the correlation, the more similar the scales’). I think the point they are making here is that the Mundt study compared identical scales, that differed only in their mode of administration (computer vs. clinician), whereas in the current study the authors conducted the scales had slightly different content and wording, and thus you would expect slightly lower correlations in this case. Perhaps they can add some wording to emphasize this point.

- Discretionary Revisions
  1) They mention in the discussion that the self report generally showed less improvement than the clinician. It would strengthen the paper if they can compare this to the findings of others who compared self report to clinician report (i.e., is this a general pattern with self report vs. clinician report? (they can review the results for the other measures they cited to examine this).

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

I am an author of a paper-pencil, self-report version of the Hamilton Depression Scale, and currently work for MedAvante, a company that provides rater training and centralized rating services.