Reviewer’s report

Title: Factors associated with dropout from treatment for Eating Disorders: a comprehensive review of literature.

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Reviewer: Stein Frostad

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Bergen June 5th 2009

Factors associated with dropout from treatment for Eating Disorders: a comprehensive review of literature.

Facino & al.

1: The question posed by the authors is reasonably well defined.

2: The authors have selected some search terms in order to find some articles describing dropout risk in the medical subject heading or among the key words in the articles. In addition, a manual search in the reference section of the papers was performed. In studies describing a clinical problem, dropout rate is an important part of the results, but the main finding in the article is usually something else than dropout. Therefore, important studies will be lost with the search terms used. The manual search in the reference list will only partially compensate for this. It would be reasonable to use a term identifying motivation. Discretionary revision.

3: Different studies on dropout have focused on different factors affecting dropout risk. Some factors seem to have been studied more than others, but at present there is no consensus on which factors that dominate risk of dropout. Therefore, this article describes a slightly chaotic diversity of possible risk factors. However, the data seem sound.

4: The manuscript adheres to relevant standards for reporting and data disposition.

5. The article describes several risk factors for dropout. Several important risk factors are not mentioned. In clinical practice precare or how well the patient is prepared for treatment seems to be associated with decreased risk for dropout. Precare allows for education and establishing an alliance between the patient and the treatment team for patients who are going to start inpatient care. Motivation for treatment is only briefly discussed. Several aspects of motivation are relevant for dropout risk: is the patient entering treatment because she wants to start treatment herself or is she starting treatment because her family wants her to start? Other, but still probably important factors affecting dropout risk are more difficult to describe in a review like this, such as how the care is organised, does the care contain regular review of the progress of treatment? When a
patient demonstrates that she has problems with taking part in treatment, what is
done to prevent dropout? Is two weeks time-out part of the programme for the
patients who are on the brink of dropping out? Discretionary revision.

6: The limitations of the work are obvious and are reasonably clearly stated. But
the problem described under 2: should be discussed. Discretionary revision.

7: The authors seems to acknowledge the work upon which they are building.

8: The title and abstract concey what the authors have found

9: The writing has some minor spelling mistakes, some sentences are difficult to
understand and should be simplified. Discretionary revisions.

Stein Frostad MD PhD

**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.