Reviewer’s report

Title: The prevalence of common mental disorders and PTSD in the UK military: using data from a clinical interview-based study

Version: 1 Date: 22 May 2009

Reviewer: Morten Hesse

Reviewer’s report:

This is a well-conducted survey of military personnel after deployment to combat. A key weakness is the lack of tables, which means that it is hard to judge the analyses.

Major essential revisions:
None

Minor essential revisions:
1. More details are needed about the survey instrument. Please mention the format and the diagnoses that it was designed to measure. Has the instrument been validated for use as a telephone interview?
2. Except from an additional table, the tables were missing from the manuscript.
3. I wonder if “martial discord” in the discussion should be “marital discord”.

Discretionary revisions:
4. Abstract: No need to focus on the UK – the findings will be of interest internationally.
5. Uni-variable and multi-variable under analysis – should that be univariate and multivariate? I believe those terms are more commonly used.
6. Alcohol abuse items are not necessarily the most sensitive for identifying problem drinking. The authors might discuss whether the estimate of alcohol abuse is in fact an under-estimation of the real prevalence of problematic alcohol use. The authors discuss a difference with a previous survey, reference 29, and note that the prevalence is dramatically higher. However, the definition of alcohol problems in the previous survey may not be comparable to alcohol abuse as measured by the PHQ.

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 declare that I have no competing interests.