Reviewer's report

Title: Prediction of posttraumatic stress disorder among adult in flood district

Version: 4 Date: 25 November 2009

Reviewer: Anke Ehlers

Reviewer's report:

The authors have been responsive to my previous suggestions and I find the paper much improved.

I have a few remaining suggestions:

1. It is not quite clear how the risk score works for variables with more than 2 categories such as age or education. For example, if someone is illiterate, does this count as 13 (because this category are those at risk) or 2 x 13 (because illiterate is 2 steps from the lowest category) or 3 x 13 (because the weight for illiterate is 3)?

Furthermore, some variables are coded 0/1, others 1/2/3 - how does this translate into the corresponding risk scores?

The authors will need to clarify the calculation on page 8.

I am also wondering whether the risk scores should be dropped from the abstract as they are not understandable without the cut-offs.

2. The authors state that they followed DSM-IV when diagnosing PTSD. However, the A criterion they used is NOT the A criterion in DSM-IV (A1: perceived threat to life or physical integrity, A2: person responded with intense fear, helplessness or horror). The authors will need to state why they used the old A criterion (DSM-III/ DSM-IIIR) or clarify whether they actually used DSM-IIIR (which also differs in where physiological responses to reminders are scored).

3. On page 10, the authors deal with the problem of retrospective assessment of mental status before the flood by stating "Despite whether there is a definite association between mental health status before the flood and PTSD remains controversial". The wording is misleading. The authors need to acknowledge that the retrospective reports may be influenced by current symptoms. There is actually quite a lot of evidence for a small effect of prior depression or anxiety on PTSD risk.

4. The authors will need to check their references carefully.

Reference 11 should read American Psychiatric Association (Ed.) instead of Association AP

Reference 14 is incorrect. The authors surname is Brewin. So it should read: Brewin, C.B.
**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests