Reviewer’s report

Title: Clinical validity of a population database definition of remission in patients with major depression

Version: 5 Date: 5 January 2010

Reviewer: John Houston

Reviewer’s report:

Here are a few minor editorial suggestions including some improvements to language of manuscript:

Abstract/Background "...It is a disabling illness that increases the use of health resources. Aim: To describe the concordance between remission according to clinical assessment and remission obtained from the computerized prescription databases of patients with MD in a Spanish population."

Background paragraph 2, sentence 1 - "...databases; because key data... thus necessitating "approximate definitions."

Background paragraph 2, sentence 3 - "...episode. If he/she starts an antidepressant after that, it will be a new episode."

Consider deleting the first sentence of Methods Definition of remission... criteria section since it is confusing. Same section - consider changing language to "As reference criteria, remission was determined based on the assessment of the database clinical course text by a psychiatry specialist... The sample was selected through simple random sampling stratified for age and gender."

First sentence of validity and utility measure indicators - Change to a complete sentence by adding "were" after "Validity indicators" and remove first outer set of parentheses, etc.

Background paragraph 2, first sentence - Break into two sentences. and change "resorting to" to "necessitating"

Results

Paragraph 1 "... Six patients (false negatives) were in remission by clinical course assessment but not approximation criteria."

Discussion

end of paragraph 1 - "... procedures require attention for reasons related to..."

Conclusions "... discrepancies are in diagnostic accuracy..."

Table 1 - False negatives is "9.4" rather than "9.6"?
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I am an employee of Lillyl, USA and a stockholder in Eli Lilly & Co.