Reviewer's report

Title: Newspaper Coverage of Mental Illness in the UK, 1992-2008

Version: 3 Date: 27 July 2011

Reviewer: Michael King

Reviewer's report:

The authors have made a comprehensive response to the reviewers’ comments. However, they have mainly defended their original position, albeit adding some explanation in the Method and limitations in the Discussion. I do not think they have specifically addressed reviewer one’s concern about the absence of a clear statement of hypotheses or how they will be tested. In addition, I still have reservations over the “exploratory” nature they claim for their article, and the vagueness of their hypotheses. In particular, they do not seem to have addressed my point: “... exactly how much change was expected and how much would meet criteria for improvement is not suggested in the Method.” In a quantitative study one normally estimates the degree of change expected, as that guides the investigators on how much data to collect and what degree of change would be regarded as significant, clinically (or socially in this case) and statistically. The words “greater” and “improve” in the hypotheses are insufficiently specific. I suppose, however, that there is now little that can be done to correct this as the authors did not take this approach at the outset.

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