Reviewer's report

Title: Characteristics of attempted self-poisoning in Sri Lanka; a systematic review

Version: 4 Date: 14 December 2012

Reviewer: David J Gunnell

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript is much improved. With the exception of some minor changes, I think it is acceptable for publication.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The term “attempted self-poisoning” is used throughout the paper. This is not a recognised term in the field – people either self-poisoning or they do not. I’d suggest using the term “self-poisoning” or “non-fatal self-poisoning”

2. Background, paragraph 2: the term prevalence rates is used – do the authors mean “prevalence” or “incidence rates”. The term rates refers to incidence, not prevalence.

3. Page 7, first sentence paragraph 2 refers to five studies, but the tables appear to present data from 6 different studies.

4. Page 7 – please provide more details of how the “island-wide survey” was conducted.


6. In interpreting the data on psychiatric morbidity in Table 5, it would be useful to include information on the method of psychiatric case identification (i.e. the screening tool used)

   http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/11/879

Minor discretionary revisions

1. The authors search is now 12 months out of date (up to Oct 2011). They may wish to update this to make the paper more up to date.
2. Page 4, final sentence, please specify the year the Ceylon Medical Journal was first published.

3. Page 7, para 1, please add a sentence explaining in what way these 4 studies were more robust

4. For those working in this area, if space allows, it would be useful to include references for the excluded studies which include data on self-poisoning in Sri Lanka

**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 have co-authored / authored a number of the studies on the epidemiology of suicide in Sri Lanka that are included in this review.