Reviewer's report

Title: Health promotion in individuals with mental disorders: a cluster preference randomized controlled trial

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Reviewer: rob donovan

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In general the authors report an apparently well-conducted and appropriately analysed experimental study. The following suggestions - in no particular order - could be considered ‘major compulsory revisions’.

1. Clarification as to whether or not the SHO managers consulted their residents before choosing their preference.

2. Comment on whether any evidence exists for the efficacy of the intervention used (it does not appear to be cited in the review ref 30). This could also be raised in the Discussion (ie one reason for small effect sizes may be that the intervention per se has limited efficacy).

3. Did the mental health professionals in the SHOs receive any training in delivering the intervention?

4. The discussion could comment on differences between these professionals in delivering the intervention possibly impacting on effect size.

5. The sample size calculation (n = 371 in each group) is inconsistent with the obtained sample sizes (n=217, n=96 before drop outs). This needs to be commented on.

6. It is stated that the sample size was based on an average 3.5kg weight change found in a review of the literature on such interventions with people with MD (ref 30). However, there appears to be no comment on this study’s 0.35kg change being only one tenth that of the average change reported in ref 30.

7. The actual number dropping out because of no further interest versus admission/discharge should be stated (the discussion states that this was the main reason).

8. Given the cited review (ref 30), there needs to be more information on how this particular study adds to the literature.

9. It would be of interest to readers for the Discussion to probe whether the intervention per se could be improved to obtain a greater effect size.

9. Given the generally small differences, comment on effect size would be appropriate in addition to significance.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests