Reviewer's report

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

Version: 2 Date: 11 April 2013

Reviewer: Kristin Schneider

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Individuals with severe mental illness face tremendous health disparities. Thus, this is an important study that has implications for weight loss treatment in SHOs.

Major revisions

1. I’m disappointed that the authors decided to abandon the mixed model analyses and thus not account for the clustering in their data. Two reviews of cluster randomized trials have revealed that the features of cluster randomized trials are often not accounted for in analysis (Donner, Brown, & Brasher 1990; Simpson, Klar & Donner, 1995), so unfortunately it is quite common. However, failing to account for the cluster analysis is a notable limitation that should be mentioned as such in the discussion as it may have resulted in a liberal test of the intervention. (Minor--The authors should also consider providing a citation that supports their rationale for dropping the mixed analyses based on the 5% cutoff and small sample size in some of the SHOs).

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The authors misstated their randomization in the sentence “Randomization occurred by means of simple random sampling”. I Random sampling in this study would refer to randomly selecting a sample of SHOs from the entire population of SHOs. “simple randomization” is more accurate.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

No competing interests