Reviewer’s report

Title: Age differences in mental health literacy

Version: 2 Date: 20 December 2007

Reviewer: Vanessa Pinfold

Reviewer’s report:

This is a focused paper, it does not tell us anything particularly new as these trends have been found before but it investigates mental health literacy trends for Australia in some detail. I feel it would be improved by addressing the following points (minor revisions):

Abstract

Background talks of community understanding which is conflated in the data with mental health literacy (knowledge, recognition and beliefs). It would help to explicitly define understanding in this way as there are other interpretations to understanding MH problems

Methods section talks of the Australia-Japan project. No other reference is made to Japan in the paper. Either explain where this data fits in with larger initiative or remove this reference as it is confusing

Main text

Studies in the UK have highlighted impact of age on beliefs or attitudes Department of Health ONS data (tracking attitudes from 1993 every 3 years) and See Me Scotland data. Data sets in Germany and Canada have also assessed these trends a reference to international interest in this would be useful.

Application of the findings; suggested study explore importance of reaching young people who when they grow old may hold different views to current generation whose understanding is poorer target young and see a general cohort impact of more favourable attitudes? or not?

Impact of response rate 34% on findings also was response rate uniform across states and territories? uniform across age groups? Other limitations well covered in the paper.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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'