Reviewer's report

Title: Do 'alternative' help-seeking strategies affect primary care service use? A survey of help-seeking for mental distress

Version: 4 Date: 22 May 2008

Reviewer: Peter Verhaak

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MS: Do 'alternative' help-seeking strategies affect primary care service use? A survey of help-seeking for mental distress: 2nd revision

Regarding authors' response:

Discretionary comments

In my previous report I commented on the fact that BEMI-I and BEMI-C contain different items. Although the authors only partially agree with my doubts, concerning BEMI-C's validity, and promised to devote a separate paper to this issue, I still consider it inappropriate to present the results of both inventories besides each other in table 2. Because, this suggests that percentages of BEMI-I and BEMI-C are comparable which is not the case, in my opinion.

Secondly: Medical service use and alternative service use were equally common (table 2), namely 60.2% and 56.6% endorsing it. However, this does not have to imply that most people use both of them, despite reports of a preference of one or other service, as stated on p.15. Theoretically it might be possible that only 10.2% endorsed both of them.

p.9: that there no resolution was possible

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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'