Reviewer's report

Title: Some peace of mind: assessing a pilot intervention to promote mental health among widows of injecting drug users in north-east India

Version: 3 Date: 29 May 2008

Reviewer: Morten Hesse

Reviewer's report:

This article is well-written, and addresses important questions both in relation to mental health, women's health, and the impact of substance use disorders. It is methodologically sound. My few comments below are related to statistics, and three should be very easy to do, the fourth will require an extra statistical analysis that may not be possible with the SPSS.

Major Compulsory Revisions

None

Minor Essential Revisions

The authors should report what can be done concerning the reliability of the psychometric measures used in this study. In this context, the authors could report at least the internal consistency of the measures (Cronbach's Alpha, or similar)

The authors should also report means and standard deviations of the somatic symptom scale at baseline and follow-up.

The authors discuss difference in attrition between groups, but do not provide data on this matter. The proportion who completed treatment should be reported by group, with a statistical analysis of the heterogeneity (i.e., a simple chi-square analysis will do). If there is not statistically significant heterogeneity in the completion rates between groups, these remarks should be made more tentatively.

Discretionary Revisions

I strongly recommend that the authors consider doing a different type of statistical analysis for pre-post changes. What I recommend is a random effects regression model, where subjects are seen as nested within groups, to see if the slopes of the symptom scales vary significantly within groups. If so, this would indicate that the groups had significantly different effectiveness.

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:

I declare that I have no competing interests