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: Carl A Latkin

Reviewer's report:

This paper integrates qualitative and quantitative methods from an evaluation of an innovative participatory action pilot mental health intervention for widows of IDUs in Northern India.

Discretionary Revisions

The section in the manuscript's introduction on mental health and illness could have greater depth. The statement "Poor mental health predisposes people to mental illness, which is common in all populations." appears to be tautological. The statement that drugs and alcohol reduce risk perceptions could also be clarified. The authors may want to provide additional references on community based participatory research.

Methods: How did the NGOs recruit the women? Little information is provided about the intervention. More information would be useful in the actual manuscript. The reference provided by the author provides only a very brief outline of the sessions. Was the intervention manualized? If so, is a manual available? If not what were the dynamics of a typical session? More information on the scoring of the GHQ and the cutoff used would also be useful. Was there sufficient statistical power to examine attrition? Who analyzed the qualitative data? Were any software programs used?

Discussion: Which of the specific themes that emerged from the analyses of qualitative stories were also the focus of the intervention and which themes emerged that were not intervention targets? Moreover, what intervention topics did not emerge in the data? In the discussion section the authors could link more of the intervention (method of development, session process, content, and group dynamics) to the outcomes. Was risk reduction and/or family relationship a major focus of the intervention? What domains should future researchers examine when evaluating similar interventions?

Note: The supplemental documents file was empty.

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'