Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of a group based cognitive behavioural therapy programme for menstrual pain management in young women with intellectual disabilities: Protocol for a mixed methods controlled clinical trial.

Version: 2
Date: 3 March 2014

Reviewer: Angela Hassiotis

Reviewer's report:

I have read the paper with great interest and I am pleased to see that CBT is being utilised further in people with intellectual disability. My comments and recommendations follow below:

1. Very good introduction! However, some caution about reports of pain and comparisons with peers of normal intelligence is required, given that the study of parents of women with autism or Down syndrome had only 24 participants.

2. I am uncertain as to whether the study refers to a protocol or a completed study as the text oscillates between what is to be done and what has been done, e.g. see measures/instruments section.

3. The study has misinterpreted the reported sample size in Hassiotis et al, 2011. This was a feasibility study and was not intended as a suggestion of what an appropriate sample size for such a trial ought to be. Currently, there is discussion that feasibility trials ought to include up to 60 individuals. As the study is not clear about its aims being those of a feasibility trial, the sample size calculation is not argued for persuasively. It gives the inaccurate perception that it is definitive which it most certainly is not.

4. The trial does not include randomisation. I am not convinced by the authors rationale but probably nothing can be done about it at this point. They may wish to look at the Beeken et al, 2013 (Trials) protocol.

In my view, the protocol needs revision prior to being published and should include the aims and objectives based on the definition of feasibility or pilot trials as per NIHR HTA guidelines. In this context, it is also important to use a unified format throughout the manuscript of what the processes of the study will be.

I declare no conflict of interest