Reviewer's report

Title: Effects of and Satisfaction with Short Message Service Reminders for Patient Medication Adherence: A Random Controlled Study

Version: 4 Date: 10 October 2013

Reviewer: Thyra E de Jongh

Reviewer's report:

Overall, the authors have adequately addressed the comments raised in previous rounds of reviewing. The writing has also noticeably improved with editing. I just have some minor -though some essential- comments that I trust the authors can address without further need for review.

Minor essential revisions:

Final sentence of the abstract (conclusion): Revise "A daily SMS should ..." to "A daily SMS could ..."

In the background section it is unclear why the sentence "However, certain studies have noted ..." would have to start on the word "however". This is not a juxtaposition to, but rather an elaboration of the previous sentence. The next sentence also comments on positive effects though. Please check how this paragraph was intended and rewrite accordingly.

Also in the background section: you state that you "studied the effectiveness of SMS reminders as a pharmaceutical intervention". The word pharmaceutical implies use of medication, which is not the case. Please revise.

Results: on page 14 you state "These findings suggest that SMS medication reminders effectively improved the incidence of delayed and missed doses." You mean that it REDUCED the incidence (as pointed out by one of the other reviewers as well).

Discussion: on page 1 you write that "senior patients can be stubborn and are likely to stop using medication based on personal decisions." I find the choice for use of the word 'stubborn' rather unfortunate as this has a very judgemental connotation. Perhaps something a little more neutral like "senior patients are often more resistant to behaviour change" could be used. In the following sentence you state that they may be "unfamiliar" with cell phones. This is at odds with the fact they you have used ability to receive and read text messages as an inclusion criteria! I would rephrase to something less strong e.g. "less familiar".

Discussion: the paragraph stating "This could be because, compared with unemployed patients, the military personnel, civil servants, teachers, and students were typically young or middle-aged adults who demonstrated relatively
better health conditions; therefore, unemployed patients considered long-term medication unnecessary" does not make sense. If anything, the SECOND group would consider long-term medication less necessary than the unemployed group. Probably something went wrong here in the editing process. Please check and adjust if necessary.

p.20: poo adherence = poor adherence!

Discussion: I have not previously commented on this as I hoped that the English editing would soften the wording but the explanation that married women who are housekeepers "lacked work stress, had time to care for themselves, and may already have been adhering to their medication satisfactorily" shows some real male bias against this group. I am sure that many of these women would argue their lives are at least as stressful as those of their husbands. Please consider rephrasing this.

Limitations: The sentence "Many studies have shown that medication adherence outcome data are purely reliant on self-reporting, generating a high likelihood of reporting bias" is incorrect. It should read: "Many studies have shown that medication adherence outcome data that are purely reliant on self-reporting have a high likelihood of reporting bias."

Conclusion: You still mention a "greater improvement in the incidence...". You mean reduction in the incidence.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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