Reviewer’s report

Title: Cost-effectiveness of cognitive behaviour therapy versus talking and usual care for depressed older people in primary care

Version: 2 Date: 17 September 2010

Reviewer: Reiner Leidl

Reviewer’s report:

The revised paper clarifies study objectives and the methodological approach and thus contributes to further promote the discussion on pros and cons of CBT amongst depressed older people in community setting.

A few “Minor Essential Revisions” and “Discretionary Revisions” remain to be considered.

I. Minor Essential Revisions

1. In general

Whenever reporting “significant differences” corresponding p-values should be provided.

2. Health Economics Objective (p. 5)

Within the aims paragraph BDI-II score as main criterion for measuring effectiveness should be mentioned. Explanations for not conducting an EQ-5-D based cost-effectiveness analysis could be shifted to the methods part (sub-section Cost-effectiveness analyses).

3. Methods (p. 6; “The intervention”)

The concept of therapy sessions still remains unclear. Does offering “up to twelve sessions” mean

a) Every patient was offered 12 session and could decide on his/her own how many to attend?

b) Therapists offered each patient a number of therapy sessions regarding the patient’s individual needs with 12 sessions being the maximum?

Clarifying this point will help to better interpret number of sessions attended and possible variance of intervention costs.

4. Methods (p. 8; “Health service utilisation”)

When deciding on disregarding hospital expenditures it should be pointed out if there is related literature supporting the hypothesis that CBT does not “affect the use of acute hospital care services” or if this statement reflects the authors’ personal presumptions.

5. Results (p. 12 Discussion)

The authors themselves raised the question if exclusion of hospital costs turned out to be appropriate (see p. 8). A corresponding answer should be given.
II. Discretionary Revisions

1. In general
Check whether numbers are reported consistently as figures or in wording (e.g. p. 11 “results”)

2. In general
Some slips of pen have been over seen (e.g. p. 2 “…204 people aged (at least) 65 years” or p. 13 “BDI-11” instead of “BDI-II”)

**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.