Reviewer’s report

Title: A prospective study of health care resource utilisation and costs associated with schizophrenia in France

Version: 2 Date: 6 April 2012

Reviewer: Roshni Mangalore

Reviewer’s report:

Major compulsory revisions

1. This paper looks at resource utilisation costs of associated with schizophrenia in France. The term ‘costs associated with schizophrenia’ gives the reader the impression that it must be cost of illness or burden of illness study. The focus of the paper, however, is on treatment / health care costs. Although some estimate of the cost of lost productivity through unemployment is included in the paper, all other indirect costs are ignored. If it is intended to be a cost of illness study, then a proper analysis would have to take into account other costs to society such as the costs of informal carers, criminal justice system costs, social welfare costs, and private alternative therapy costs and may also refer to intangible costs. If it is not intended to be a cost of illness study, it may be more appropriate for this to be made clearer in the title.

2. It is not clear whether the study was a privately organised study or part of the research project in a large institution. Given the nature of the patients and the sensitivity of the data that was collected and the way in which it was collected, it appears that this must have been part of a large research project in a large institution. Authors should either explain the context and settings of the study in the paper or include proper acknowledgements if that is appropriate.

3. The methods used for estimation need a bit more clarification. It has been mentioned that there was high rate of attrition in the sample. Authors should explain what the effect of this would be on the estimates and how was this handled in the method used. Secondly, more detailed explanation of the results shown in table 4 is appropriate. Authors need to explain the results more clearly in terms of significance and validity of the results. If any diagnostic tests were conducted, they should be reported.

4. Table 1 needs some attention. Column three heading is %. But not all entries there can be %. It is not clear whether the figures in column three are % or SD. Tidy this up.

5. Table 2 also needs tidying up. If the n in column 2 refers to actual users of services, it should be associated with columns 5 and 6. Move columns 5 & 6 to positions 3 & 4 and then put columns 2, 3 & 4 under the heading 'users of health services'.
6. Table 3: Mean costs for service users makes little sense without information about the numbers (n) associated with it. How were these costs estimated? What is the significance of the S.E. in these tables?

7. There is no mention of the limitations of the study. It would be appropriate to include a section on limitations and suggestions for further research.

Minor Essential Revisions

8. Need to check grammar. There were some places where sentences did not read well.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests