Reviewer’s report

Title: The Burnaby Treatment Center for Mental Health and Addiction, a novel integrated treatment program for patients with addiction and concurrent disorders: results from a program evaluation

Version: 1 Date: 26 November 2012

Reviewer: Michael Tam

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for a chance to review this interesting paper describing the Burnaby Treatment Centre for Mental Health and Addiction, along with the preliminary outcomes. Please see below for detailed specific comments.

Major compulsory revisions

[A1] A major limitation is that the follow up results are based on the minority of patients who were still present in the facility at 6 months – rather than 6 months follow up in general. It seems highly probable that these patients are not representative of all clients of BCMHA at 6 months follow up. As such, the follow up results of Table 3 and 6 though interesting (and I acknowledge that these are preliminary results) is at best suggestive. The description in the results section in the abstract “... that patients have reduced psychopathology and almost no substance use after six months of treatment” is misleading without this context.

Minor essential revisions

[B1] “Development of a treatment model for individuals with CD in British Columbia, paragraph 1, page 4”. You wrote, “The BCMHA was deemed to be a tertiary care program and given the mandate to provide comprehensive care to individuals with severe substance use, mental health and physical health problems...” It is unclear in this section whether the BCMHA was to provide care for individuals with individuals who concurrently had ALL these issues, or combinations of these issues. It wasn’t clear to me until 2 pages later (paragraph 2, page 6) in the paragraph starting “The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), who established...” This section should be clearer.

[B2] “Paragraph 2, page 5”, in the paragraph starting “The program is laid out for...” In the first sentence, you state that clients can stay up to 9 months in the inpatient facility. However, in the second sentence, you state that the centre does not have strict and arbitrary time limits. Although I recognise that 9 months is a very long period of time in this context, it is (at least) an arbitrary time limit. Either some additional explanation or a change in word choice is needed.

[B3] “Paragraph 2, page 5”, in the paragraph starting “The program is laid out for...” In the third sentence, you note that the treatment team consists of care providers that include practitioners of alternative medicine. In the next sentence,
you claim that treatment is based on “best evidence”. Some additional explanation is required.

[B4] “Paragraph 2, page 5”, in the paragraph starting “The program is laid out for...” In the sentence, “The treating team consists of...”, “art and music therapist recreational worker” either needs to be plural, or if singular, the insertion of “an”.

[B5] “Participants and procedures, paragraph 1, page 7”. You started a sentence with “128 clients”. This should be written out in words if you are starting the sentence with a number. It was also unclear in this section why you chose to do an assessment only on 128 clients. Furthermore, the time period of this study is unclear and not reported until quite late in the describing the results.

[B6] “Results, paragraph 4, page 9”. The sentence starting with “The MINI revealed that...” Your last sentence states that “The complete list of life time prevalence of mental illnesses and addictive disorders can be found in Table 6”. This is actually TABLE 7 in your list of tables.

[B7] “Discussion, paragraph 1, page 10”. The claim that your data as compared to normative data provided by the authors of the BSI, demonstrates psychopathology distress that is beyond that of the general population and psychiatric inpatients needs a citation.

[B8] “Discussion, page 11”. You wrote, “With one in four injection drugs, the number of injectors is relatively low”. This sentence seems out of place and doesn’t flow with the rest of the paragraph.

[B9] “Discussion, last paragraph on page, page 11”. “CCD clients” should be “CD clients”.

[B10] “Conclusions, page 13”. In the paragraph, “most of the patients who participated in this study were never, in the course...” you introduce new results/discussion findings. Discussion about the apparent lack of appropriate assessment is probably better placed in the discussion section of this paper.

[B11] “Table 3”. *, **, *** needs to be explained

Discretionary revisions

[C1] “Background, paragraph 2, page 3” – first two sentences. You could consider simplifying these two sentences to “In the Canadian province of British Columbia, patients the highest number of patients with CD... etc.”. You don’t really talk about rural/urban access issues in this paper.

[C2] “Background, paragraph 2, page 3”. You wrote, “in longitudinal studies, having CD was associated with low readiness to change...” This is perhaps better phrased and more consistent with the citation as “lower motivational readiness to change”.

[C3] “Paragraph 1, page 5”, in paragraph starting “The BCMHA was mandated with developing a novel...”. This paragraph seems relatively repetitious given that
you have discussed the government and then the BCMHA “mandating” or given the “mandate” for various activities in the prior paragraph.

[C4] “Paragraph 1, page 5”, in paragraph starting “The BCMHA was mandated with developing a novel...”. The sentence beginning with “An expert panel...” is a bit long and clumsy. Given C3, please consider streamlining this paragraph to make it more readable.

[C5] “Paragraph 2, page 5”, in the paragraph starting “The program is laid out for...” You can change “concurrent disorders” to the abbreviation “CD”.

[C6] “Discussion, page 11”. You wrote, “Finally, it is important to note that substance use in this population is never a single substance pattern by regularly includes a range of psychotropic substances.” If this is demonstrated by your baseline data, it would be good to report on this.

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

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

**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.