Reviewer's report

**Title:** Interaction between stress and the BDNF Val66Met polymorphism in depression: a systematic review and meta-analysis

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 26 July 2013

**Reviewer:** Pascal Meier

**Reviewer's report:**

Major revisions

The literature review is rather old and needs to be updated with an exact date of the last literature search.

You state in the abstract to have searched sychINFO, Medline and Pubmed. Medline and Pubmed are basically identical. The National Library of Medicine's Medline database is available from several sources, one of them is Pubmed.

The abstract needs to be written in a structured way and needs to include more information on the results. It is currently somewhat vague.

The introduction is very long and should be shortened.

You have combined the p values rather than effect sizes. Why was this approach used?

You used one sided p values, meaning you have focused on a single, pre-specified effect direction. Why can we be sure that this gene polymorphism can affect the effect only in one direction?

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

no conflicts