Reviewer's report

Title: Public beliefs about treatment and outcome of mental disorders: a comparison of Australia and Japan

Version: 1 Date: 7 March 2005

Reviewer: Robert Kohn

Reviewer’s report:

General

This is a cross-national comparison on mental health literacy between Japan and Australia. I am unaware of such comparisons previously being reported in the literature, and in particular between two very different types of health care systems.

The paper overall is well written. There are, however, some issues:
1. The methods used to translate the Australian instrument into Japanese is not clear. What specific methodologies were employed to assure equivalence in the two instruments?
2. The method of selection of subjects in Japan remains unclear. How were households selected and subjects within the households? Also, in Australia how were subjects within households selected?
3. A 4% difference between vignettes is stated to be significant. Even so it would be helpful if in the results the actual statistics were presented where appropriate.
4. The tables are set up in a way that the reader can not easily distinguish differences between Australia and Japan. Perhaps having the tables combined so that one can see them side by side. This would also permit including a notation as to where significant differences do lie. It is not fair that the reader should calculate what is a 4% difference.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Please respond to all the above concerns.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.