Reviewer's report

Title: Over 50 years of trial in Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica: a survey

Version: 2 Date: 9 October 2008

Reviewer: Karla Soares-Weiser

Reviewer's report:

All my comments should be categorized as MINOR REVISIONS.

PAGE 2 (LAST PARA): Although it has been common to authors to refer to the 1948 trial as the first published RCT many sources have proved otherwise. I would suggest authors to check at James Lind Library website for a historical perspective of RCTs

PAGE 5:
“A total of 34976 people were allocated into these trials.”

I am not sure this is a relevant information a pooled number of participants randomised, as it is my understanding that participants were randomised for different interventions and with different diagnoses

“Trials concerned with depression account for nearly 40% of the total…”

This is incongruent with what you say in the abstract, please review.

PAGE 6:

“In 21 trials, those providing funding directly employed authors.”

It is not clear that you are discussing the ones funded by PI or all trials. Please specify.

PAGE 7:

“By searching Medline and Old Medline, we found 566 records for the 582 trials (97.3%).”

I believe this to be the most important contribution of this study. It would be important to make it clear, probably by providing a table with sensitivity/specificity of each search, as I could not figure out the numbers given in the text. It would also be important to pass on this information to Medline, so that these trials could be re-indexed

PAGE 7 AND 8:
TRIALS have been misspelled as TRAILS
**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 hereby declare that I have no financial competing interest. My only potential conflict of interest is that in 1998 I published a similar paper with the senior author of this paper.