Reviewer's report

Title: The Health Informatics Trial Enhancement Project (HITE): Using routinely collected primary care data to identify potential participants for a depression trial.

Version: 4 Date: 15 March 2010

Reviewer: Martin Dugas

Reviewer's report:

The authors provided a revision of the manuscript and addressed all comments from my review. I have no further major comments, just very few minor comments.

Minor comments:
The information on section 251 is very important for non-UK readers.
Table 1 provides important, valuable information and is very useful for the reader, but quite long.
If there is a conflict with page restrictions, it could be placed in the supplement.

page 9, paragraph "anonymisation": I suggest to call this paragraph "data anonymisation and pseudonymisation".
In my understanding, the authors are using pseudonymisation, because they provide a system linking field "to ensure that the data can be rejoined later". Truly anonymized data cannot be rejoined.
There are various safeguards implemented that only the source organisation (i.e. the treating physician) can access personal data. It is actually important to work with pseudonymized and not fully anonymized data for reasons of data linkage and data quality.
Reference 6 points to SNOMED CT, is there a more specific reference for Read codes?
Reference 13: Link is not working

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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