Author's response to reviews

Title: Protocol for a randomised controlled trial investigating the effectiveness of an online e-health application compared to attention placebo or sertraline in the treatment of generalised anxiety disorder

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editors-in-Chief,

Please find attached a revised copy of the study protocol 3145883633542454 entitled ‘Protocol for a randomised controlled trial investigating the effectiveness of an online e-health application compared to attention placebo or sertraline in the treatment of generalised anxiety disorder’.

The following concern was raised by reviewer Lawrence Friedman:

My only comment concerns the description of the randomization scheme at the top of page 9. It is unfortunately that the block size of 6 is disclosed (it would have been even better if random block sizes were used). The identity of the intervention for the last participant randomized within a block (and sometimes even the last two) will be known in advance.

This has alerted us to an unintended consequence of publishing the protocol. In response to this concern we will change the randomisation schedule to one with random block sizes, rather than a fixed and known size of six. Thus no clinicians conducting assessments will be able to identify the group membership of any participant. Due to the nature of the interventions (involving both online and drug treatments), clinicians monitoring participants throughout the trial will need to be aware of participants’ group membership. However, none of these staff members will be involved in assessments.

Please note the commencement date of the study has also been updated on page 17 of the manuscript.

Thank you for your review and consideration of this study protocol.

Kind Regards,

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