Reviewer's report

**Title:** A randomised controlled pilot study of an alcohol focused intervention versus a healthy living intervention for problem drinkers identified in a general hospital setting (ADAPTA)

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 2 March 2013

**Reviewer:** Yun-Fang Tsai

**Reviewer's report:**

(A) Will the study design adequately test the hypothesis?

I have four questions related to the study design.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Based on the Aims of the study, the work was supposed “to explore the acceptability and feasibility of both postal and online assessment instruments at six and twelve month follow-up” (Point 6), but I could not find the related design or method.

2. In the Blinding section, the authors stated the follow up data are collected by postal questions to achieve the data blindness to treatment allocation. However, in the Patient outcome measure section, they also stated “All follow-up data are collected by postal questionnaire at six and 12 months post randomisation with postal reminders sent two and four weeks after initial correspondence. In the event of a participant failing to complete their questionnaires, attempts to obtain at least the primary outcome data are made via telephone.” These are contradiction and need to be clarified.

3. Information regarding qualitative data collection is incomplete. Who will perform the interviews? What kind of interviewer training will be performed? How did the authors make sure the interviewers’ accurate and consistence? In addition, the procedure to make sure the quality of qualitative data is also missing.

Discretionary Revisions

Will the authors consider excluding patients who are recommended to abstinence by the physician due to illness?

(B). Are sufficient details provided to allow replication of the work or comparison with related analyses: if not, what is missing?

Yes.

(C). Is the planned statistical analysis appropriate?

Yes.
(D). Is the writing acceptable?
Yes.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests