Reviewer's report

Title: MI-SPRINT (Myocardial Infarction - Stress PRevention INTervention): Study protocol of a randomized-controlled interventional trial to reduce the incidence of posttraumatic stress after acute myocardial infarction through psychological counseling

Version: 3 Date: 13 August 2013

Reviewer: Donna Gillies

Reviewer's report:

This is a very well written paper. Most of the following comments/suggestions are fairly minimal.

Abstract
Rather than just 'based on substantial amount of distress ---“ I would add something about this is being an objective measure.

Background
P1. 'for at least one month’ needs a little clarification i.e. pertaining to duration of symptoms
‘the reviewed literature’, I would state this is a meta-analysis and of what
Suggest slight rewording of ‘patients still suffering’ to ‘those patients continuing to suffer’
I don’t think the last sentence is needed.

P3. I think a stronger case could be made for the physiologic effects of PTSD e.g. actually numbers/data showing just how much of an association / risk it is. Also, if these studies have corrected for severity of MI that should be stated (‘prognostic risk factors’ is a bit to non-specific).

Increased? ‘coagulation activity’

P4. What sort of participants were include in this meta-analysis? Not sure what point is being made here – is it that interventions seem to be effective when targeting individuals either with PTSD or at high risk as opposed to all who have undergone trauma.
Not sure what is meant by the two sentences ‘No evidence---through this pathway’

P5. Rather than just referring to the two interventions here I would suggest a one line description of the framework for each.

Add blinded to ‘interviewer-rated’

Methods
Design
There needs to be more detail about allocation here i.e who and how

Sample Size calculation
This section seems a bit too wordy and could be reduced. I’m not sure that referring to the meta-analysis which does not show a change is useful especially as you are assuming a 1 point decrease.

Study Sample
Does ' Based on----' refer to the study CCU?
How do you know about 30% will be high risk – Is this where the information from previous studies is relevant?
When will the screening tools for High Risk be used. Has this tool be used/validated in other settings as a screen for high risk?

Timing of assessments
The phrase 'and are randomized---' does not seem to belong here.

Intervention
I think the descriptions of the interventions in the text could be improved. Perhaps basing it more on the items in the table would give a clearer picture.
Also, I is the control intervention avoiding any terminology specifically about ‘trauma’ or rather about the Mi as a trauma?
Also, when and how was this intervention delivered, e.g. single session with therapist by the bedside within 48 hours of admission?

Was the booklet specific to each mode of therapy?

Ethics
Consideration
‘possibility for its treatment’ – not sure what this meant e.g. referral pathways

**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