Reviewer's report

Title: A double-blind randomized placebo-controlled trial of adjuvant therapy with minocycline for schizophrenia (The MINOS Trial)

Version: 1 Date: 30 July 2013

Reviewer: Olivia M Dean

Reviewer's report:

Overall this is timely and well-designed study. The authors have clearly outlined their intention and the outcome measures will adequately address the research questions. Minocycline is gaining increasing interest as a psychotropic and the results of this study may extend the understanding of the use of minocycline for psychiatry.

Major Compulsory Revisions
- The authors indicate in the inclusion criteria that participants are required to meet DSM-IV criteria for schizophrenia, but are being screened using the Operational Criteria for Research (OPCRIT). Is this tool acceptable and validated?
- Why aren't cognitive measures being included if this is a key outcome? The PANSS cognitive items are not generally used as a measure of cognition alone. It may be best to list this as a tertiary outcome.
- The statistical section is unclear. Mixed model repeated measures analysis is listed, but should be employed to analyse the primary outcome at week 12. More detail regarding the scales and the specific analyses should be included.

Minor Essential Revisions:
- The introduction is lacking information on the anti-inflammatory effects of minocycline and the link to schizophrenia. There is brief information on animal models and clinical results, but a little more background would benefit the publication (for a review see Dean et al, CNS Drugs; 26(5):391-401).
- There is a typographical error in paragraph #2 under "study objectives and aims".
- The sample size should be listed earlier.

Discretionary Revisions:
- Are the authors concerned that their sample may be biased by having both the exclusion of women of child-bearing age, and the inclusion of those within 5 years of diagnosis? This will preclude most women from participating?
- The section on the CGI-SCH could be removed.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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.