Reviewer’s report

Title: Guided and unguided CBT for social anxiety disorder and/or panic disorder via the Internet and a smartphone application: Study protocol for a randomised controlled trial

Version: 3 Date: 8 November 2013

Reviewer: Sean Perrin

Reviewer’s report:

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

The manuscript would be improved if the authors were to include the following:

A. In the introduction, it would be extremely useful if the authors could set out the observed effect sizes - preferably, intent-to-treat/controlled for iCBT (with or without apps and therapist involvement) in relation so SAD/PANIC or any relevant outcome. The purpose of this information is to help set up the power analysis in the Methods section and to contextualize the findings. In relation to the latter, it would be helpful to have a sentence or two to say how effect sizes for iCBT in previous studies compare with those obtained in RCTs of face-to-face CBT for SAD/Panic when patients are recruited directly from clinics and/or internet/newspapers. The purpose of this information is to point out that effect sizes/outcomes for iCBT for patients recruited from the internet are comparable (within the confidence interval) for outcomes obtained in treatment trials of clinically referred patients.

B. In the Methods section, the power analysis section needs to make reference to the previous observed effect sizes to say how the trial N was arrived at - and any software uses to achieve this N. It is important that the authors distinguish between the power required to detect superiority between the two active treatments, and superiority of both treatments versus wait-list.

2. Is the writing acceptable?

This is an extremely well-written manuscript that will be a valuable addition to the literature. The authors can remove the box around the abstract.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests whatsoever with this trial.