Reviewer’s report

Title: Guided self-help for binge eating: randomised comparison of face-to-face versus e-mail treatment

Version: 2
Date: 4 March 2014

Reviewer: Paul Farrand

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have done a good job of addressing the points I raised in my review.

This is an interesting paper, and one that I feel makes three main contributions to the literature. First, especially following proposed revisions being addressed, the paper makes a significant contribution to undertaking research surrounding CBT self-help interventions, addressing methodological issues surrounding type of support support and workforce in particular. Second, the paper addresses many methodological issues surrounding RCT’s that will be of interest to the readership. Finally, the paper, although not able to make definitive statements surrounding effectiveness, at least raises the question as to whether CBT self-help has promise as an evidence based intervention for eating disorder, and will hopefully lead to better designed studies to address this issue, both by the authors and others in this area.

Minor Essential Revisions
The only essential revision to make refers to reference 34 – should read ‘Impact of support’ not ‘Impact os support’.

Discretionary Revisions: The authors highlight the difficulty in specifying, and hence controlling, the type of support provided in advance utilising the Glasgow and Rosen taxonomy and as addressed by Farrand and Woodford. That specifying this in advance was difficult to do, and rather the support format emerges during treatment for each participant is an interesting point and one I feel would be good to discuss more fully in the paper. Such points are interesting ones methodologically, and hence contribute to the interest and contribution of the paper.

CONSORT guidelines are identified as being followed. However CONSORT also specifies that the title of an article should include reference to the methodology, in this case ‘Pragmatic RCT’. I have included this as a discretionary revision, to enable the Editor to make the final decision on this point.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the
statistics.

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