Author's response to reviews

Title: Cost and Outcome of Behavioural Activation versus Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Depression (COBRA): study protocol for a randomized controlled trial.

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Version: 2
Date: 3 January 2014

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Dear Sean,

Re: MS 1990435751124555 - Cost and Outcome of Behavioural Activation (COBRA). A Randomised Controlled Trial of Behavioural Activation versus Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Depression: Study Protocol

Thank you for asking us to revise this manuscript. We have:

1. Ensured the title conforms to journal style for study protocol articles
2. Added the contact details for all of the co-authors on the title page
3. Amended the abstract which is now on a separate page, does not exceed 350 words and is now structured into separate sections headed Background, Methods, Discussion
4. Listed the trial registry, along with the unique identifying number
5. Added a trial status section after the discussion
6. Amended the Authors Contributions section to ensure all contributors are referred to
7. Included a figure title after the reference list

Whilst we appreciate the suggestion from the reviewer under ‘Discretionary Revisions’ we wish to remain with our original definitions and call our comparator Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). As the reviewer hints, this was a source of considerable debate in the trial team during the development of our protocol and prior to funding being awarded. In the UK, CBT is the term of preference for psychotherapy based upon the cognitive model of change. Most psychotherapists trained in this manner refer to themselves as ‘Cognitive Behaviour Therapists’. Our COBRA CBT therapists are not “clinicians of similar training/experience as in the BA group” and are following a clear protocol based on mainly, though not exclusively, cognitive methods to achieve change. Our clinical protocol for CBT contains a number of minor, albeit important, behavioural elements and so it would not be correct to omit the ‘B’.

Thank you for your attention and we trust that these revisions meet your requirements for publication.