Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 30 December 2013

Reviewer: Sean Perrin

Reviewer's report:

This is an excellent study that is likely to have a very large impact on the field and the delivery of depression treatment across countries.

Major Compulsory Revisions - None.

Minor Essential Revisions - None.

Discretionary Revisions -

The authors might consider saying that BA and CT are different theory-driven approaches that fall under a general rubric which is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - and then revising the manuscript slightly by calling the "CBT" treatment "Cognitive Therapy" - as they do (cf. "CT") on page 10 of the manuscript. The mediator analyses for the "CBT" arm of the trial are clearly "cognitive" and flow from Beck’s cognitive model of depression. I think it is probably more "true" based on the evidence base to say that CT (specifically) requires a higher level of training/skill/experience than a theoretically amorphous "CBT" that is frequently delivered as a grab-bag of active and inactive interventions and by clinicians of similar training/experience as in the BA group here.

Level of interest: An exceptional article

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests of any kind.