Reviewer's report

Title:A pilot study to assess the feasibility and impact of a brief motivational intervention on problem drug and alcohol use in adult mental health inpatient units: study protocol for a randomised controlled trial

Version:2 Date:25 June 2014

Reviewer:Sean Perrin

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1. Will the study design adequately test the hypothesis?

Yes. I do have one small query and that is whether the authors considered the possibility that as as the participants in the trial are all inpatients that patients randomized to MI might discuss or share materials from their interventions with fellow patients who had been randomized to TAU on the same unit. Leakage of the experimental treatment into TAU on an inpatient ward is probably unavoidable - and I understand that any leakage is not systematic nor a an intervention itself - but I think other readers like myself might wonder about this issue in relation to outcome. Perhaps the authors could insider adding a sentence or two to the manuscript to address this issue.

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

Yes.

3. Is the planned statistical analysis appropriate?

Yes.

4. Is the writing acceptable?

Yes.