Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Relating Therapy for voices (the R2V study): Evaluating a relationally-based therapy for people who hear distressing voices

**Version:** Date: 6 May 2014

**Reviewer:** Sandra Bucci

**Reviewer’s report:**

**Major Compulsory Revisions:**

1. **Research Objectives:** The objectives are clear and appropriate for a feasibility study. Could the authors clarify what they mean by ‘disturbance’ associated with distressing voices ad how disturbance differs from distress?

2. **Hypotheses:**
   • **Hypothesis 1** – is the focus on general distress or voice-related distress? Please clarify.
   • One of the aims of Relating Therapy is to re-balance the hearer-voice relationship with regard to both power and proximity, yet there does not appear to be a hypothesis about power/proximity. Unless hypothesis 2 measures these dimensions, an additional hypothesis regarding power/proximity is required. If this is implied in hypothesis 2, then the terms power/proximity should be explicit in the hypothesis.

3. **Methods/Design:** Is the Cognitive Therapy Checklist really an appropriate measure of adherence? Would the authors consider developing a specific Relating Therapy adherence measure of the purpose of this trial?

4. **Participants:** It is not clear to me why a primary diagnosis of substance misuse is an exclusion criterion?

**Minor Essential Revisions:**

1. **Introduction:** The Introduction is well-written. However, I think the Introduction would benefit with mention of the fact that more recent CBT for psychosis trials, and CBT trials for distressing voices, no longer focus on voice reduction as their primary outcome (i.e. the aim of these trials is not to eradicate voices).

2. **Spelling:** Separate out feasibility/pilot as these are two different things (rather than or, as the ‘/’ symbol implies). Also, p. 6 – ratter should read ‘rater’.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable
**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests