Reviewer’s report

Title: A two-way street: bridging implementation science and cultural adaptations of mental health treatments

Version: 2 Date: 7 May 2013

Reviewer: Shannon Dorsey

Reviewer’s report:

The authors were very responsive to reviewer feedback and the manuscript is much improved with good potential for impact on the field. I would only request three minor essential revisions prior to publication. The paper now nicely lays out possibilities for integration and benefits for integrating cultural adaptation and implementation science. Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. First, documentation of adaptation—the importance of this mentioned three times (pg 10, 25, 27) but not enough detail in the paper for why this is important (it makes sense, but what exactly [cultural adaptations and other?], and how, should adaptations be documented and by whom…).

2. Second, do the authors need to acknowledge IRI in the acknowledgements section, along with the other grants mentioned?

3. Third, and in my opinion the most important needed revision, on page 15, the authors detail one possible personnel-based approach for integrating IS and CA—WHO should implement and who should adapt—by using two individuals to drive/lead adaptation—a facilitator and a Cultural Adaptation Specialist (CAS). I think this is presented proscriptively, as this is the way one would approach integration. Instead, given the novelty of integration, this section should be shortened and this personnel-based approach offered as only one possible example (or this should be only one of a few examples presented). In many circumstances, having one individual ‘responsible’ for cultural adaptation can be problematic, if they are not truly representative of the population, and there are a few different models of approaching cultural adaptation (as the authors are aware). In addition, on the implementation side—often a team-based approach is used (Aarons’ work), and one individual is not driving the efforts. Therefore, it might be beneficial to acknowledge that how these two areas are actually integrated in practice is still in development/requires further study, but there are a few approaches (this being one of them). Deployment-based adaptation would be another example (Kumpfer’s work). I believe the paper is very strong prior to this section, so just do not want the last section (if presented proscriptively) to take away from the merits of the earlier work.

There were also a few things within this section that were unclear. The heading includes “who should implement” but the section isn’t so much about who should
implement, but who should drive both CA and other needed adaptations (may want to revise the header). Also, champions are mentioned—champions DO tend to have specific knowledge of the intervention being implemented (that is often part of their value), maybe this is a typo/pronoun “who” need for clarity (the champion DOES have knowledge the facilitator does not?). Also, when comparing the skills of the CAS and a facilitator, nowhere in the CAS role description is knowledge of the intervention mentioned (focus is on population knowledge), but then in the comparison paragraph it says that the CAS, unlike the facilitator, needs expertise in the intervention. When shortening this section, clarification on what expertise each role requires would be beneficial.

Two optional/discretionary edits include:

1. Page 5—Point #2: should probably, as a separate point or more clearly in #2, include determining IF adaptation is needed and then if so, how, who and when vs just having this included parenthetically as a part of # 3.

2. Page 12—In the WHAT to adapt, when faced with need to adapt in multiple areas (which is often the case), how do organizations/ researchers determine which adaptations get them the biggest “bang for buck” in terms of implementation and client outcomes? This is included in discretionary because I don’t think we have the answer to this—but when you think about integrating IS and CA, there may be a few places where adaption need is identified, but a setting only has so many resources. How might one prioritize?

**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:**

No competing interests