Reviewer's report

Title: A new approach to child mental health care within general practice. An Evaluation study

Version: 2 Date: 31 March 2015

Reviewer: Johannes C van der Wouden

Reviewer's report:

Child mental health care in primary care is a challenging domain. This study reports on the evaluation of a new approach in Dutch general practice, which seems to improve identification of psychosocial problems in children.

There are a number of issues that require clarification, I have outlined these below.

Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. Both in the abstract and in the paper, the description of the intervention lacks detail.
   Possibly, the protocol of the integrated care intervention, first mentioned in the Results (line 188), should be outlined earlier, in the Methods, when describing the intervention). Also, a flowchart might help to understand how care was integrated in this experiment.

2. It is unclear why the investigators used data from 2011 for their comparison between experimental practices and control practices, and not included the data from 2012.

3. In the results, a subgroup analysis is presented by age (Table 2: 4-10 and 11-18 years). It is unclear (a) whether this was a preplanned subgroup analysis, and (b) the cutoff was chosen beforehand or data driven. Why not cut-off at 12 years, a common boundary for primary versus secondary school children.

4. The data protection guidelines, described in lines 158-160, seems to apply only for the NIVEL Primary Care Database. Please describe how this was handled in the experimental practices.

5. Table 2 and 3 are very messy, especially the last column: I would prefer to have test results separately for each comparison.

6. It would be helpful for readers to have a listing of the diagnoses that were made.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
7. Although not a native speaker myself, I am quite sure that the use of English terms and language is suboptimal.

Examples: - line 124 ‘deployment’
- the use of ‘got’ in various places
- line 222 ‘significantly differen than’
- line 284 ‘valid’: probably ‘validated’

I would recommend to have a native speaker, familiar with health care terminology, check the manuscript.

8. Throughout the text there are several typographical errors, e.g. using capitals with running text.

9. Line 154 ‘we collected data’ : from what I understand data were already collected, but data of a subset of practices was selected for the comparison with the experimental practices.

10. The statement that the children had on average nearly 5 sessions with the YMHPN (line 195) seems to be contradicted by Table 1, which shows only 471 sessions for 127 children, an average of less than 4 sessions.

11. In figure 1, the number of children depicted in each pie chart is lacking. Furthermore, having printed this in black and white, I could not differentiate between the middle grays (dark blue and pink).

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests