Author's response to reviews

Title: Design of an international multicentre RCT on group schema therapy for borderline personality disorder

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editorial team of BMC Psychiatry,

Please find enclosed our revised manuscript ‘Design of an international multicentre RCT on group schema therapy for borderline personality disorder’, which we would like to submit to BMC Psychiatry.

In this manuscript, the study protocol is described for an international, multicenter RCT that compares the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of group schema therapy versus treatment as usual for borderline personality disorder. In addition, we compare two formats for delivery of group schema therapy. By combining a study on clinical effectiveness, an economic evaluation as well as a series of additional investigations, we contribute to an evidence-based understanding of current optimal treatments for borderline personality disorder.

All authors have made substantive intellectual contributions, approve of the final manuscript and declare that they have no competing interests. Our manuscript has not been previously published, and is not currently submitted elsewhere.

The study protocol is in accordance with international standards for ethical treatment of human participants and has been approved by the Medical Ethics Committee of Maastricht University for the Dutch sites, by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee for the Australian sites, by the Ethics Committee of the Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg, the Ethics Committee of the University of Lübeck and the Ethics Committee of the Psychotherapist Association Hamburg for the German sites, by the Ethics Committee of the Eginition Hospital, Medical School, University of Athens for the Greek site, and by the National Research Ethics Service Committee London - Camberwell St Giles for the British sites. Ethical review is in process in the USA.

Funding has been obtained from the following major funding bodies: the Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development and Netherlands Foundation for Mental Health for the Dutch sites, the Else Kröner-Fresenius-Stiftung for the German sites, and from Australian Rotary Health for the Australian site.

Documentation concerning proof of ethical and funding approval has been sent to BMCSeriesEditorial@biomedcentral.com. In addition, except for the (local) ethical approval for the Psychotherapist Association Hamburg, all non-English documents have been translated in English. Except for the translation of the ethical approval for Maastricht University these translations are endorsed and signed by a contactable person at the corresponding institutes. These translations have also been sent to the abovementioned address along with the original documents.

Point-by-point description of changes made for the revised manuscript:

- We have now included the date of trial registration in the abstract of the manuscript.
- We have now listed the sources of funding and provided a description of their role in study design, collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, the writing of the manuscript and the decision to submit the manuscript for publication.
It should be mentioned that one of the authors of our manuscript, Prof. Silvia Evers, is an Associate Editor for the BMC series. We are therefore entitled to claim a 20% discount off the Article Processing Charge.

Yours sincerely,

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