**Reviewer's report**

**Title:** Major Depressive Disorder as a Nonlinear Dynamic System: Bimodality in the Frequency Distribution of Depressive Symptoms over Time

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 15 February 2015

**Reviewer:** William Lee

**Reviewer's report:**

This is an excellent paper which deserves wide readership. The authors used repeated measures to examine the course of symptoms of depression. My only comments are small and primarily of the 'suggestion' or 'no for publication' variety:

1) Abstract>Methods: "recorded weekly during years" is not very clear or very good English. "Recorded weekly for two years" might be more suitable.

2) Abstract>Conclusions: "their course data" might be better expressed as "life course data"

3) Last part of Introduction, para 1: cf. [9] could be better expressed. A sentence or two outlining the referenced paper and why it should be compared with the subject under discussion would help to set the scene for the general psychiatric reader.

4) Methods>participants: What is the justification for accepting 67% of records with a cut off of 104 weeks? Presumably more weeks would have meant fewer participants and vice versa. I would like to see some justification for why the cut-offs were used (or a simple assurance that this choice was not made after looking at the data.

5) Results: time series plots: Some reference to how these groups were defined is appropriate. Same with histogram section. It seems this was simply from observation.

6) Discussion>limitations:"Offset" does not mean the opposite of onset, and is best not used here.

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

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

**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.