Reviewer's report

Title: Enthusiasm for homework and improvement in subthreshold depression during behavior therapy: Secondary analysis of data from a randomized controlled trial

Version: 2 Date: 10 June 2014

Reviewer: Bridianne O'Dea

Reviewer's report:

Major Revisions

I appreciate the extent of the revisions made by the authors. However, I am still concerned about the use of the K10 when the authors outline that they wish to assess 'depression'. There are major conceptual differences between depression and psychological distress and the measure used cannot be linked directly with depression. I would suggest that the authors edit the title to include the words psychological distress as this was the primary outcome measure of the study.

Minor Essential Revisions

I feel that the authors could have defined the homework tasks a little clearer in the Background section so that someone who isn't familiar with CBT could understand what exactly the participant was being asked to do. In addition, I felt that the authors could have elaborated a little more on the actual 'client characteristics', 'therapist characteristics', 'task characteristics' that are associated with homework completion - and there may need to be an explanation for why these were not assessed/controlled for in the current study.

I am a little confused on the exclusion criteria for participants. From my understanding of the SEM - you only included participants who completed TWO or more sessions of the CBT program? Forgive me if I am misinterpreting this, but it seems that you need at least 2 sessions to examine the links?

I believe that in the Measures sections, I am not sure how relevant a Cronbachs alpha score is given you have only used 2 questions for enthusiasm. Also, I believe that you should use the heading 'Psychological Distress' in you headings rather than the Abbreviated 'K6 Score'

Under Treatment, could you clarify whether or not participants where given homework in Session 1.

Under the heading 'Data Analysis' I feel that the 'Session by session changes in K6...' is best included in results section. Also, did you use any other software, i.e. SPSS or was all analysis conducted in AMOS.

Did you consider measuring homework completion rates? Rather than just enthusiasm? Could you please provide a justification on this?
There are a number of grammatical and spelling mistakes. Please review.

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, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests