Author’s response to reviews

Reviewer’s report

Title: Electronic self-monitoring of mood using IT platforms in adult patients with bipolar disorder: A systematic review of the validity and evidence

Version: 0 Date: 15 Sep 2015

Reviewer: Manja Koenders

Reviewer's report:

This review on the validity and effectiveness of electronic mood charts is greatly improved compared to the last version. It now gives a valuable overview of the relevant studies and brings an important message on the dubious and largely unknown validity and utility of these electronic tools. This paper could be a valuable contribution to the field, although I have some additional comments.

Major comments

- A quick search shows that (probably because of not specifically searching for studies using smartphone applications?) the authors missed an important study by Shärer et al., (march 2015) in BMC Psychiatry in which a cohort of bipolar patients (N=54) used a smartphone app based on the NIMH-LCM, which was validated against QIDS, YMRS and paper-based NIMH LCM. Can the authors explain why they missed this study? I would advise the authors to perform an additional search and include search terms specifically referring to smart-phone applications (e.g. app, application etc).

- Please mention briefly how the found results should be interpreted in light of all the potential biases that are mentioned by the authors: e.g. are validity or beneficial effects over or underestimated?

- I still like to see a comparison (in the discussion section) between the validity of paper-based charts and those found for the electronic charts. In my view the authors should especially mention whether the low validity of self-reported mania is comparable to those found for paper charts.

- Please check Table 1. There seem to be some errors. For instance Depp et al., 2012, the authors report a r of .052 with a significant p-value. It is unlikely that such a low correlation is significant. Probably this should be a r of .52.
Minor comments

- Introduction: the authors mention on p. 5 that electronic self-monitoring potentially may have harmful effects. What kind of effects do they refer to here? Please explain shortly.

- Table 1, study by Depp et al., 2010: the YMRS correlation coefficient and p-value is reported while this is a non-significant correlation (p=.086). For the other studies non-significant correlations are not shown. Please use one method to report non-significant results.

- Check the language, for instance p. 5, sentence 2: 'monitoring and have a may have higher..'"

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

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Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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