Reviewer’s report

Title: Predictors of the effectiveness of an early medication change strategy in patients with Major Depressive Disorder

Version: 2 Date: 10 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Heather A. MacPherson MacPherson

Reviewer's report:

This study examined predictors of the effectiveness of an early medication change strategy in patients with major depressive disorder (MDD). Primary outcomes from this trial demonstrated that remission rates in an early medication change (EMC) group versus treatment as usual (TAU) were not significantly different. The current paper similarly reports statistically negative results after correction for multiple comparisons. However, recurrent MDD, prior medication at study entry, and lack of atypical depression showed promise as potential predictors of higher remission rates in EMC vs. TAU. Though this is certainly an important and understudied topic, the publication of a second paper with null findings from the same sample offers limited value above and beyond the initial publication, and therefore limits the conclusions that can be drawn, and hampers my overall enthusiasm for the paper. Also, on a minor note, the writing is a bit choppy and there are some grammatical errors and awkward wording/transitions throughout, which should be addressed.

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.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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