Reviewer’s report

Title: Longitudinal Trajectories of Comorbid PTSD and Depression Symptoms Among U.S. Service Members and Veterans

Version: 0 Date: 20 Aug 2019

Reviewer: Douglas Zatzick

Reviewer's report:

This paper addresses an important topic in the field of traumatic stress studies: longitudinal trajectories of symptom development in prospectively followed trauma-exposed patient populations. Overall, the methods are sound with the sampling frame well explicated/referenced. The choice of the PCL and PHQ-8 as screening measures for PTSD and depressive symptoms are well justified. The manuscript could benefit from some enhancements, however. The literature review could be expanded to a broader discussion of the current manuscript findings in the context of the now sizable body of work relating to PTSD trajectory assessments (see Galatzer-Levy et al., Clinical Psychology Review, 2018). Specifically, the discussion could better address how the identified trajectories in the current investigation provide corroborative or discriminant trajectory classification when compared to prior prospective cohort investigations. Also, the discussion might productively be expanded to include reflection on cutting edge investigations that incorporate trajectory analyses into the secondary assessment of randomized clinical trials (see Galantzer Levy et al., PLoS One, 2013 & Osenbach et al., Psychiatry Interpersonal and Biological Processes, 2014). Finally, it appears that a major formatting error has occurred that needs to be addressed in a large subgroup of the endnote citations such that journal names have been replaced by acronyms.

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.

Unable to assess

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

Yes

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 recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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