Reviewer's report

Title: Co-morbidities of mental disorders and chronic physical diseases in developing and emerging countries: a meta-analysis

Version: 1 Date: 14 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Victoria Simms

Reviewer's report:

I have been asked to comment on whether the paper should be divided into two: one on co-morbidities of CMDs and chronic physical disease, and the other on co-morbidities of schizophrenia and neurotropic parasites.

I completely agree. I think you will get two solid, valuable and entirely distinct papers that only share a search strategy.

The results of the search fall naturally into two groups. The first is mainly prevalence studies of CMDs among populations with chronic physical disease. The second group is largely case-control studies of neurotropic parasitic infections among people with schizophrenia. The first looks at an array of common conditions among other common conditions, with no claims to investigate causality. The second investigates a very tight research question about an association between rare exposure and rare outcome, with a causal relationship in mind. That's why it uses case-control studies. They're not reversed alternatives of the same question. They are completely different.

A single literature search strategy was used, but that won't be a problem. I would think of it as a final step in the review cascade: allocating each paper to a review topic.

There is a big mistake in the abstract. The abstract says 36.6% of patients with mental disorder had chronic physical disease. It's the other way round. 36.6% of patients with chronic physical disease had mental disorder. If the paper reviewed a coherent body of literature with a consistent exposure and outcome, this mistake would not have been made. It's very difficult to keep things straight when there are two reviews in one.
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.  

Yes

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 am able to assess the statistics

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