Reviewer's report

Title: A randomized, controlled trial of dietary improvement for adults with major depression (the 'SMILES' trial)

Version: 0 Date: 27 Sep 2016

Reviewer: Norman Temple

Reviewer's report:

This study is a randomized controlled study and reports that when subjects with depression are given an improved diet, they experienced an improvement in their symptoms. However, the study has several weaknesses. In particular, the sample size was rather small while the duration was fairly short (only 31 persons in the diet group completed the study; the duration was 12 weeks). The study is therefore preliminary in nature. However, (based on the literature review reported in the paper) this is the first randomized controlled study to investigate the impact of improved diet on mental disorders. For that reason the findings are likely to be of much interest and may spark more research in the area.

Several corrections need to be made to the paper.

1. The Abstract should state the number of subjects in each group that completed the study. This is essential so that readers can judge the reliability of the findings based only on the abstract.

2. P 6, line 8, I find it strange that of all the many dietary recommendations available, they would base their diet in part on Greek dietary recommendations published in 1999 (ref 18).

3. Same page, line 24, does an alcohol intake of "2% of E" mean a maximum intake of 2%. What if subjects do not want to drink alcohol?

4. Same sentence. What is meant by "fibre/other 3% of E"?

5. P 8, line 21, Here the authors state that the "key food groups" are vegetables, fruits, olive oil, and legumes. This makes no sense.
6. P 10, line 53, do not start a sentence with a number unless written as words.

7. Same line, eligible is misspelled.

8. P 12, line 2, NNT should be rounded to 4.1. Make the same change in the abstract.

9. Table 2, physical activity, remove the final decimal place.

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 recommend additional statistical review

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