Reviewer’s report

Title: Antidepressant use and risk of adverse outcomes in people aged 20 to 64: cohort study using a primary care database

Version: 0 Date: 07 Aug 2017

Reviewer: John Read

Reviewer's report:

An important study with a huge sample.

It would be useful to define 'adverse drug reaction' as all the other outcomes would seem to fit that term

Lines 65-68

There should be mention of the reviews finding that ADs are no better than placebo for most recipients


107 Rationales for the exclusion criteria needed

143 Rationales for the demographic confounders needed (are you suggesting these groups may be less likely to suffer the adverse effects?)

400-403 This sentence does not appear to make sense. Limiting participants to depressed people does not help distinguish whether depression or the drugs are causal of the adverse effects.

The Limitations section should stress that GP records are extremely limited regarding adverse effects. For example, only biological/medical adverse effects are recorded and reported (as in the
vast majority of clinical processes and research studies); ignoring the very high rates of interpersonal and emotional effects

e.g.:


Another limitation is that there is no way of knowing whether the people actually took the drugs or not.

Clinical implications section seems overly cautious.

People need to be told about these effects.

And there should be a strong recommendation about avoiding unnecessary prescribing, given even more evidence of adverse effects (and relative inefficacy - see above)

In summary this is a valuable study in need of some relatively minor amendments/additions.

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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