Reviewer’s report

Title: Ethnic inequalities and pathways to care in psychosis in England: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Version: 0 Date: 19 Jul 2018

Reviewer: James Kirkbride

Reviewer's report:

Peer reviews of systematic reviews can be an onerous task, but it was a pleasure to read this thorough, well-conducted and clearly described review. Your review largely provides an update on existing reviews, including new relevant data published on findings in England over the last 6 years. This review is timely given current consideration by the UK Government to review the Mental Health Act, and given the need to meaningfully tackle these inequalities. Your review strengthens the evidence base here, and should become the reference work in the field.

I have some suggestions to improve the manuscript:

1. Abstract: I think you should include results which show that the South Asian group is also more likely to be compulsorily admitted. The abstract is perhaps overly-focussed on black groups, and more balance should be given here.

2. Abstract: The conclusion that your review reveals persisting but not worsening patterns needs evidencing. From reading the paper you did not explicitly seek to test whether these inequalities changed over time (for example, via meta-regression).

3. Methods: p4. "We then carried forward [studies] rated as medium or high". This initially made sense, but of your 40 included studies in Table 2, eight were rated as low quality and included. This seems to diverge from your methodological approach, and should be rectified. Seven out of eight of these studies were published before 2012.

4. Methods: p5. "Language and region” section. For the avoidance of doubt please confirm or otherwise clarify whether all studies included in this review had to be conducted in England or Wales (consistent with the scope of the MHA.

5. Methods: p7: "Subgroup analyses for compulsory admission were conducted by patient type, first episode psychosis compared to recurrent admissions and specific sections of the Mental Health Act”. This may not be clear for the unfamiliar, non-specialist reader. I would define what you mean by FEP vs recurrent admissions. More importantly, many readers (especially
outside the UK) will not be familiar with the various "Sections" of the MHA. The majority of your paper focuses on differences in Section 2, but this section (or others) is not defined anywhere. I suggest adding a Supplementary Table of the Sections and their definitions.

6. Results: please report any "p=0.00" as "p<0.01", since p will very rarely equal zero.

7. Results: p9: "Analyses of psychosis episode indicate a significantly (p=0.07)". While I acknowledge that you set a liberal p-value of 0.10 for inclusion of results, this still points to only weak evidence of a difference between repeat compulsory and first admission only differences for the black vs white groups, as indicated by the overlapping 95% CIs presented in your results.

8. Results: p9: Same para, penultimate sentence beginning "Compared to the White reference" - please make this clear you mean "elevated rates" of compulsory admission.

9. Discussion: p13: "...perceived greater risk and consequent need to more immediately 'cure' ethnic minority people...". This feels like it needs greater discussion, or removal from the manuscript. Perceived by whom, for whom? Is this in specific reference to the South Asian group (as the previous sentence implies) or all ethnic groups? Is this perceptions of the community around people with psychosis, or perceptions of psychiatrists, police and judicial services?

10. Discussion: p15: "...over many centuries for ethnic minority people". Please provide a reference to support this.

**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.

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**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
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Yes
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