Reviewer's report

Title: Lamotrigine versus inert placebo in the treatment of borderline personality disorder: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial.

Version: 3 Date: 27 April 2015

Reviewer: Tara Donker

Reviewer's report:

General comments:
This paper describes the design of an RCT aimed to evaluate the clinical- and cost effectiveness of lamotrigine vs. inert placebo in the treatment of borderline personality disorder. The manuscript has importance in the field of psychology and psychiatry. The manuscript is well-organized and well-written, and the study (double-blind multicenter RCT with a large sample size) is well-designed. As this protocol as already received ethical approval and external funding approval, the current peer review will only consider the acceptability of writing and whether sufficient details to allow replication are provided. Sufficient details are provided to allow replication of the study if the authors address some of the comments below. I only have a few comments the authors may wish to address.

Minor Essential Revisions

Title and abstract
1. Identify the study as an economic evaluation in addition to the RCT
2. Include the perspective of the economic evaluation (NHS health care) in the abstract.

Methods
3. Who will conduct the SCID assessments and how are the assessors trained?
4. Please add psychometric properties to the questionnaires
5. Will the researchers conduct a check whether the participants have really taken their medication (medication adherence)? Please describe the method.
6. Health economic analysis: the authors are advised to use the CHEERS checklist for economical evaluations which provides guidelines on how to report CEA/CUA (Husereau et al 2013; Consolidated Health Economic Evaluation Reporting Standards (CHEERS): Explanation and Elaboration..Value in Health (16) 231-50)

Discussion
7. Please specify the National Guidance on the treatment of BPS in England advises against the use of pharmacological treatments.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests