Reviewer's report

Title: Jail-to-Community Treatment Continuum for Adults with Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Disorders: Study Protocol for a Pilot Randomized Control Trial

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Reviewer: Nikolaos Boumparis

Reviewer's report:

I enjoyed reading this protocol very much. The authors describe their aims clearly and concisely. It is my belief that this study will advance research and practice for inmates with CODs and is therefore, a worthwhile contribution to the literature.

However, I do have some remarks:

1. I would like to see a flow diagram according to the CONSORT guidelines. This would improve clarity regarding the various steps of the study.

2. In the following paragraph:

"Treatment group. Inmates assigned to the treatment group will participate in the DDMI-IGT continuum. Between four and eight groups of participants will complete the DDMI-IGT treatment during the RCT, depending on how many participants are enrolled in each IGT cycle."

I would like the authors to clarify (for replication purposes) up to how many patients they are planning to include in these treatment groups.

3. Regarding the following paragraphs:

"Additionally, we will collect sociodemographic data for participants, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, age, and sex, obtained though clinical and administrative records. Inclusion of these variables will allow examination of potential differences in treatment outcome as a function of each variable and, controlling for sociodemographic factors in statistical analyses."
"Although not a primary aim of this study, an important clinical question is the extent to which the intervention might be differentially effective as a function of inmate characteristics at treatment entry."

Although, the sample size of 60 might be appropriate given the developmental focus of the current study I have my doubts whether it is appropriate to assess subgroups of patients given the limited sample size.

Also, in the first paragraph there is a typo: "though" should be "through."

4. The authors mention in "Aim 1" that:
"All transcribed qualitative data from interviews and focus groups will be coded according to coding guidelines which will concentrate on deductive themes focusing on the feasibility and acceptability of treatment programs and protocols."

Is there any reference for these guidelines available that you could cite?

5. The authors mention in "Aim 2" that:
"We will examine baseline clinical, legal, and demographic differences between groups to determine if RCT treatment group randomization was successful."

In which way are you going to examine this? I would like to remind you that according to the CONSORT guidelines significance testing of baseline differences in RCTs should not be performed.
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