Reviewer's report

**Title:** The "Outcome Reporting in Brief Intervention Trials: Alcohol" [ORBITAL] framework: Protocol to determine a core outcome set for efficacy and effectiveness trials of alcohol screening and brief intervention

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 31 Oct 2017

**Reviewer:** Steven MacLennan

**Reviewer's report:**

This is a clearly written and straightforward protocol for developing a COS for use in the field of alcohol brief interventions (ABI) effectiveness research. It can be published without any revisions.

It is a protocol and not a report of a COS but nonetheless I checked against relevant reporting items in the COS-STAR checklist. Also checked against the COMET Handbook V1.0 guidance.

Scope is defined early. Need for a COS is justified with ref to systematic reviews noting heterogeneity in definitions and measurement hindering appropriate synthesis of the evidence base. No consensus on what to measure, how to define, and how to measure.

Potential for impact stated, giving further justification to the study.

Primary and secondary aims are clearly stated and appropriate

The research process follows what is recommended in the COMET handbook V1.0 and the guidance from the COSMIN initiative. RQs 3 and 4 are more novel but an excellent extension: developing a COS is a lot of work to waste if it ends up not being implemented and used.

**Methods:**

Consensus methods are appropriate and similar to what has been done in other recent COSs.

Review methods are signposted to PROSPERO.
List of stakeholders looks appropriate

Delphi scoring rules in line with previous studies

A minor criticism (here and of PPI for the 'how to measure' elements of COSs in general) is that there could perhaps be a little more detail on how the stakeholders will receive information about the outcome measurement instruments. What do you anticipate the 'map of change measurement' in the field might look like? Will patients, as stakeholders, understand "validity" in the vein that COSMIN use it?

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Quality of figures
All images and figures within the manuscript should be genuine i.e. without evidence of manipulation. No specific feature within an image may be enhanced, obscured, moved, removed, or introduced. If you have concerns about the veracity of the figures you should choose the first option below.

Statistical review
Is it essential that this manuscript is seen by an expert statistician? If so, please give your reasons in your report.
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that i have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal.