Reviewer's report

Title: The incidence of smoking and risk factors for initiation of smoking in medical faculty students

Version: 4 Date: 8 March 2006

Reviewer: Tibor Baska

Reviewer's report:

General

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

In Methods/Analyses part authors define calculation of incidence and prevalence rates. However, a definition of yearly prevalence is the same as for an incidence! Probably, it is a mistake. I suggest to define yearly prevalence as "The number of students who smoked at the time of completion of the questionnaire" divided by "The number of students at the beginning of the relevant year".

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

In the Discussion authors stated: "...medical education may possibly have an indirect negative effect on smoking". Such term seems to me still a little bit misleading. I suggest to use the term "university study" instead of "medical education".

Author mentioned also data from Slovakia. Beside citation used by authors, there are also published data directly from medical students in Slovakia, which are very appropriate for a comparison: Baska T, Straka S, Madar R: Smoking and some life-style changes in medical students – Slovakia, 1995-1999. Cent Eur J Publ Health, 2001; 9(3):147-149.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.