Reviewer's report

**Title:** Estimating under-coverage of the Aboriginal identifier for cardiovascular conditions using linked mortality and hospital data in Western Australia

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 27 September 2010

**Reviewer:** Raj Bhopal

**Reviewer's report:**

**Minor essential revisions**

1. I don’t think tables 1 and 2 are formatted correctly. The authors need to check carefully.

2. The authors should state how this work advances that in their reference 11 (which I have not read).

**Discretionary revisions**

1. The authors are writing for an international audience, whose interests are unlikely to be aboriginal health. The paper would be both strengthened and made more interesting by placing it in the context of ethnic coding/monitoring, and quality of data in health surveillance.

2. I think the interpretation may be worth a re-think. Given the constraints and limitations of ethnic coding these results indicate high levels of accuracy and remarkable completeness of fields. Table 3 tells an important story that needs more emphasis – the estimates are amazingly accurate in remote areas.

3. The current standard recommended method of assessing ethnicity – self-report – allows for changing one’s mind. Presumably many people are of mixed heritage. Using ‘ever’ aboriginal does not seem in these circumstances, the key result. I would give more credence to the extra people identified using the majority method.

4. Estimates of the effects of adjustment for mismeasured on death disease rates would add to the paper.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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 I have no competing interests