Reviewer's report

Title: Asking or Measuring? Self-perceived Quality of Life Predicts Mortality Risk Better than a Panel of Biomarkers, but the Combination of Both Does Best

Version: 1 Date: 5 May 2011

Reviewer: Lijana Zaletel-Kragelj

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The title and abstract accurately convey what has been found in the study. However, in the title I propose to omit the first part (the question).

2. The Introduction could be improved in the sense that is could have even more clear structure.

3. The research question should be more explicitly posed as well as specific protocol objectives stated while the aim is defined well enough.

4. The methods are appropriate while their description could be in some parts a little bit more comprehensive. Firstly, I miss more detailed description of the study design. Only the statement that »the SHIP study design and data have been published previously« is not sufficient since not all readers have access to the journal where the study design is described. Secondly, I miss a description of the methods for evaluation of differences between areas under the ROC curves.

5. It is said that survival curves in Figure 1 are calculated by the Kaplan-Meier method. Since Kaplan-Meier survival curves are in practice usually step rather than smooth curves, I propose to change the smooth curves in Figure 1 to the step ones.

6. The present discussion and conclusion are adequately supported by the data. However, the discussion could be improved by adding more strong statement on significance of the findings for their application in practice, and possibilities for future research.

7. In the list of references the journal abbreviations should follow Index Medicus/MEDLINE

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.