Reviewer's report

Title: Parental compliance-an emerging problem in Liverpool Community Child Health Surveys 1991-2006

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Reviewer: Apolinaras Zaborskis

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Manuscript title:

'Parental compliance-an emerging problem in Liverpool Community Child Health Surveys 1991-2006'

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BMC Medical Research Methodology

- General comments

The article analyses the trends and factors associated with parental questionnaire compliance during the four cross-sectional health surveys between 1991 and 2006 for a specific school based epidemiological study. The authors of the paper are right that subjects' participation in the survey is a critical point for representativeness of the data collected and it is difficult to achieve high compliance in the surveys among adults. Because of that scientific analysis of this problem is matter of great concern.

Therefore, the presented manuscript is either seriously flawed or does not provide a useful contribution to its area of research and it should not be published in the high standard journal.

- Major weakness (Compulsory Revisions)

1. There is lack focus on the scientific analysis of the problem. In general, the background, methods and partially results sections of the article describe the Respiratory Health Surveys in Liverpool, but not the problem of low response rate of study population in epidemiological studies, which is being expected from the title and aims of the article. For instance, in the background section it was expected the rationale for the study, some references to other similar studies, the novelty of the presented research; in the methods section specific methods and arguments for them should be presented.

2. The results and the discussion sections use simple descriptive analysis that sometimes seems a little bit trivial. Some additional survey of non-respondents aimed to get information about reasons of non-compliance would be very important for the study in its field of research.
- Minor Essential Revisions

author can be trusted to make these. For example, missing labels on figures, the wrong use of a term, spelling mistakes.

1. The Background section must be supplemented with the rationale and novelty of the study.
2. The Methods section must be oriented to study aims.
3. Table 1 and its description must be removed to the Methods section.
4. The Discussion section must be supplemented by references from other studies in its field.

- Discretionary Revisions

These are recommendations for improvement which the author can choose to ignore. For example clarifications, data that would be useful but not essential.

1. Is it correct definition of Body Mass Index? A relevant answer to this question may be missing because this indicator is not related with the study goal and description of this indicator must be removed.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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 that I have no competing interests