Reviewer's report

Title: Lost Productivity Due to Premature Mortality in Developed and Emerging Countries: An Application to Smoking Cessation

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Reviewer: Anne Magnus

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions
While the authors have collected much data and created a mathematical model that could be used in many locations of the world, their results are not at all surprising or novel. In fact they have not dealt with some of the more controversial aspects of economic evaluation at all.

1. When and why are societal perspectives useful? What perspective is used most in the literature? Some discussion needed.

2. I am unconvinced of the need to compare countries in respect of this component of benefit of health interventions. The healthcare systems, prevalence of disease and risk factors and costs of the countries included in the analysis are all so very different that comparisons (presumably of health interventions) with or without productivity costs are incredibly difficult before considering potential productivity gains. Some discussion needed.

3. I am unconvinced of the need to use Human Capital approach. If this work were repeated with the Friction cost approach the conclusions reached would be very different. Thus the conclusions reached here are purely an artefact of methodology rather than economics. This is not acknowledged by the authors.

4. Decisions reached on the basis of inclusion of productivity gains using the current methodology would potentially discriminate against older and female populations. This needs to be acknowledged also.

5. I am unconvinced of the value given to household production. Why not replacement cost? This needs to be discussed and justified.

6. I am disappointed that absenteeism related to morbidity is totally ignored, not acknowledged as potentially important and worthy of measurement. Why is this?

7. Sensitivity analysis could be used to examine some or all of my concerns and to do so would require for example an assumption regarding the length of the friction period. This is not too much to ask.

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