Reviewer's report

Title: Demographic and occupational predictors of early response to a mailed invitation to enroll in a longitudinal health study

Version: 1 Date: 21 November 2006

Reviewer: Andreas Stuck

Reviewer's report:

General: Well written article, clear focus, adds relevant information to the field, context and current literature well described.

Minor essential revisions:

1. In the Methods section, the authors mention that participants were asked to complete a questionnaire for participation in the Millenium cohort study. The authors should explain what exactly persons were invited for. For example, did completion of the questionnaire involve that participants would have to have regular health checks or examinations in the future? This is relevant, because participation depends on the type of study one is invited for. If possible, the authors should consider publishing a sample invitation letter as an appendix.

2. In the introduction, the authors briefly state that associations between participation status and participant characteristics are not consistently found due to differences in survey methodology, type, or population. This sentence should be clarified.

3. Given the fact, that associations between participation status and participant characteristics are not consistent, the authors should add this point as a limitation of the present study to the discussion section. For example, the results presented in this study might be conceptually relevant for studies in older people, but it is likely that predictors would be different in a cohort of older persons.

4. Type error in reference 29 (author name).

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

none

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'