Reviewer's report

Title: Current European guidelines for management of arterial hypertension: Are they adequate for use in primary care? Modelling study based on the Norwegian HUNT 2 population

Version: 2 Date: 17 July 2009

Reviewer: Jonathan Mant

Reviewer's report:

I will not write a full review of this paper, but respond to the three specific questions that you asked me as an editorial board member, given outstanding comments from referee 1 and continued concerns of referee 2.

1. Have the authors satisfactorily addressed referee's 1 concerns?
   The referee’s concerns are largely about the limitations of assessment of Cardiovascular Risk using an absolute risk approach (which is closely related to age). However, this is the approach adopted by the ESH/ESC guidelines, and indeed by other guidelines such as New Zealand, and NICE in England. What the authors do is model the impact of these guidelines if implemented in Norway. I think this is a reasonable thing for them to do, and critique of the guidelines (while perhaps relevant for the discussion) does not undermine the validity of their methods.

   Referee 1 also raises legitimate concerns about the calculations with regard to need for GP visits. They have provided detail, but this has led to concerns from referee 2 - see below.

   In conclusion, I believe that the authors have covered the first point in their response, but that further work is required with regard to the second point.

2. Are the concerns raised by referee 2 substantial and do they need to be responded to by the authors by changing/ redoing their analysis?
   Yes they are, and I think they need responding to.

3. If the authors could do further work on the manuscript, what do they need to do to make it of publication standard?
   They need to respond to the new comments of referee 2. I am less concerned about comment 1, as some information about the guideline is helpful.

   Comments 2 and 3 require careful thought and response. Both better justification of the values they have selected (with regard to 2), and sensitivity analysis to look at the impact of different assumptions are required.

   With regard to next steps, I would suggest that the manuscript is further revised, and then re-reviewed.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.