Reviewer’s report

Title: Persons with dementia lost in the community: Is it wandering or something unique?

Version: 1 Date: 14 December 2010

Reviewer: Hugo Lövheim

Reviewer’s report:

Dear Author,

I have read your manuscript “Persons with dementia lost in the community: Is it wandering or something unique?”. Although the problem of people with dementia who get lost is an important one, I do not think the current manuscript adds enough new knowledge to warrant publication.

The most important weakness with this manuscript is the method itself. Basically, I do not think the use of newspaper reports holds as a basis for scientific use. The filtration through journalists and newspaper editors is too likely to severely bias the sample. Even though you acknowledge this problem in one paragraph in the discussion section, I think you should develop this section, and in future research consider using reports directly from people with dementia and their relatives or care-givers.

The aim of the manuscript is somewhat diffuse. I do not think that “wandering” and “getting lost” is commonly confused in clinical practice. For us who work with people with dementia, it is clear that the event of getting lost is a stochastic single event, and that the aberrant motor behaviors of wandering that people with dementia often exhibit is of completely different nature. I doubt research is needed to state this. Furthermore, I do not think that your manuscript is very well suited to answer the question of wandering vs. getting lost, as you have only focused on people who have get lost.

Several statements in the introduction and the discussion are not properly supported by references. You should not include discussion and opinions in the result section - this should be moved to the discussion section.

Commercial trademarks and companies should preferably not be mentioned in the text. I do not think the paragraphs about Project Lifesaver™ etc add important information. If any of the authors has some interest in this or any other company mentioned in the text, this should also be clearly stated in the competing interest section.

Based on this criticism, I have recommended to the editor not to publish the manuscript. I recommend you to thoroughly re-write the text and also to make the manuscript more condensed and focused on the empirical findings, with appropriate and not to far-reaching conclusions and a sufficient limitations.
section before resubmitting it.

Yours Sincerely
Hugo Lövheim

**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 have no competing interests.