Reviewer’s report

Title: Long-term declines in ADLs, IADLs, and mobility among older Medicare beneficiaries

Version: 2 Date: 26 July 2011

Reviewer: Benjamin Shaw

Reviewer’s report:

The revised manuscript entitled “Long-term declines in ADLs, IADLs, and mobility among older Medicare beneficiaries” is much improved after attending to the requested revisions. My assessment includes only two comments, both of which should be considered as “discretionary revisions”.

First, the manuscripts current emphasis on detecting aging effects is potentially misleading. The study design involved people of different ages being followed for different lengths of time. In this context, variation in the length of follow-up could reveal either aging or period effects.

Also, while I agree that the inclusion of proxy respondents and those participating in Medicare managed care has enabled the authors to makes some substantial methodological contributions, I feel that the discussion of these contributions on pages 21-25 could benefit from becoming more streamlined.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests