Reviewer's report

Title: Increasing incidence and mortality of infective endocarditis: a population-based study through a record-linkage system

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Reviewer: Helen Johansen

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Increasing incidence and mortality of infective endocarditis: a population-based study through a record-linkage system

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This study uses administrative data and record linkage to estimate incidence and mortality for infective endocarditis over the last decade. It found an increasing incidence and mortality for IE in residents of the Veneto Region (North-Eastern Italy). Mortality increased with age and the Charlson comorbidity index, in subjects with previous hospitalizations for heart failure, in those with cancer, and (in the subcohort with microbiological data) in IE due to Staphylococci (40% of IE).

I applaud the use of administrative data and record linkage.

Major Compulsory Revisions: My only real comment concerns the selection of incident cases. This can be a bit tricky and the best wash out time varies by disease. In the work here, an increasing number of years were used over time to identify an incident case. As one looks back and removes patients for varying numbers of years, the base line could change. This could have an effect on the trend reported. Could the authors please check if a one or two year washout applied consistently for each year made an effect on the trend results?

Other than that, I am quite happy with the paper.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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 that I have no competing interests.