Reviewer's report

Title: Life satisfaction two-years after stroke onset: a study in Luxembourg of the effects of sex, occupational status, memory function and quality of life among stroke survivors (Newsql) and their family caregivers (Whoqol-bref).

Version: 2 Date: 29 May 2012

Reviewer: Theresa Green

Reviewer's report:

1. Major Compulsory Revisions

The underlying goal of the study is described on the bottom of page 4 as: “to meet the recommendations of the “Helsingborg Declaration on European Stroke Strategies” for 2015…to develop a primary healthcare system that provides preventative care and socio-educational help services.

a. I would like to see a summary purpose statement which describes exactly what this study was looking at.

b. Participants and procedures:

i. Please provide a bit of clarity around the National Health Insurance statement – were participants selected based on the NHI administrative reimbursement database?

ii. What were the exclusion criteria for the study?

iii. What did the training for researchers to communicate with aphasic patients consist of?

c. Instruments:

i. Translations – were the translated versions of the questionnaires screened by like-speaking clinicians (i.e. physicians, nurses) to ensure clinical meaning was appropriate for the different language groups?

d. Discussion & Conclusions

i. You have posed several questions at the end of the discussion – what is the intent of asking these questions?

ii. I think you overstate your results with your conclusions, especially with reference to government actions and economic recessions. Present what your work adds to the literature, which you did in the first couple of lines. Consider also that conclusions should only be 3-4 sentences and no new information presented that wasn’t already written about in the paper. Relate your conclusions back to the statement about Helsingborg Declaration.

e. Methodological Aspects: subtitle the section as Strengths and Limitations

i. P 10, paragraph 2, lines 10-12 – inclusion of aphasic patients is a strength of the study, but the method around how they were included needs further
explanation in the methods section.

2. Minor Essential Revisions
i. In the background section, paragraph 2, line 8: sentence beginning ‘Patient’s QoL…’ please rephrase this as it is awkwardly worded – I had to reread several times to get the intent.

ii. Paragraph 3: sentence beginning ‘The impact of deprivation…’ – please define or describe what deprivation entails and how you are using it in the context of the study.

iii. Paragraph 4, line 6 – eliminate ‘The’ from beginning of sentence about caregiver burden and combine with the previous sentence.

iv. You might consider subheadings in the background section – I was having a bit of trouble keeping concepts being discussed separated and then seeing the integration overall in informing the research study.

v. Discussion section succinctly describes the results in relation to the outcomes of interest; authors posit potential explanations for the relationships observed.

vi. Please integrate an explanation of the ‘capability approach’ (reference needed here) with the initial use of the term directly - it is in the next part of the paragraph but needs to be better integrated with the first use of the term. You might write: “…face this challenge of life. Capability is defined as …”

vii. P 9, 3rd paragraph, line 4: ‘concerned’ does not fit - ? involved?

i. Conclusions need to be enhanced and linked back to the stated purpose of the study.

i. P 11, final paragraph, first line: awkward wording – try “Our research contributes to understanding the relationship between LS and QoL…”

ii. 3rd sentence – awkward – Try “As these tools…home, they can…”

iii. Suggest a new paragraph starting with “Our findings bring to light…”.

3. Discretionary Revisions: n/a

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.