Reviewer's report

Title: Adherence to Cancer Screening Guidelines Across Canadian Provinces: an observational study

Version: 1 Date: 11 March 2010

Reviewer: Cornelia J Baines

Reviewer's report:

It is an extremely rare occurrence for me to review a paper and have so few comments or suggestions to make. Using an innovative and compelling method to appraise the impact of clinical guidelines, the authors confirm what I have long believed, that guidelines are more often ignored than respected and this is particularly the case for breast screening in women age 40-49 as well as for prostate cancer screening. As the authors point out in their conclusion, inappropriate screening practices have major implications for the efficacy (not effectiveness) and cost-effectiveness of population based screening. This is an important and fascinating paper.

Major Compulsory revisions: none
Minor essential revisions: none
Discretionary revisions:
1. Consider changing effectiveness to efficacy as mentioned above.
2. Help the reader by expressing differences in a more consistent manner. Some readers will be puzzled that the OR of 2.19 in Quebec translates into increases in probability of 19.34%. Presenting the changes as percents above pre-existing levels may not be the most useful way, especially when in the Discussion one reads an increase of 19% is an increase of 80%.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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.