Reviewer’s report

Title: Indirectly estimated absolute lung cancer mortality rates by smoking status and histological type based on a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 11 February 2013

Reviewer: Joshua Muscat

Reviewer’s report:

This review is a monumental undertaking and a significant contribution to the literature. The study compiles a large bulk of the descriptive epidemiology of lung cancer, which addresses some important ongoing issues such as relative rates in women vs. men and many others.

There are clearly some limitations in the approach and the voluminous data and discussions take this into consideration.

As extensive as this current manuscript is, there are still some slight modifications I feel are necessary.

The abstract should make clear that the reviewed literature is highly selective. A systematic review usually implies the universe of literature but the authors excluded many studies (e.g. occupational etc.). The abstract methods should note this.

My second comment is that most RR in the review were unadjusted or age-adjusted. That is fine. In ever smokers, some of the findings observed might be due to differences in cigarettes per day. For example, men smoke more CPD than women. The discussion section should comment about whether CPD differences might account for some of the observed findings by sex, country etc.

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.