Author's response to reviews

Title: Cancer awareness and socio-economic position. Results from a population-based study in Denmark

Authors:

Line Hvidberg (LINE.HVIDBERG@ALM.AU.DK)
Anette F. Pedersen (AFP@ALM.AU.DK)
Christian N. Wulff (CHRIWULF@RM.DK)
Peter Vedsted (P.VEDSTED@ALM.AU.DK)

Version: 2 Date: 28 February 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We submit our manuscript “Cancer awareness and socio-economic position. Results from a population-based study in Denmark” to be considered for publication in BMC Cancer.

Cancer awareness is an important issue since it may explain variations in health-care seeking. The increasing focus on earlier cancer diagnosis as an important tool to optimise cancer outcome has especially shown the importance of awareness. Hence, there is a need for large studies to assess cancer awareness and the possible differences in awareness among specific subgroups.

The aim of this study was to determine the awareness of cancer symptoms, risk factors and survivability in a large Danish population sample and to analyse possible associations with several register-based socio-economic position (SEP) indicators.

In total, 3,000 randomly selected persons aged 30 years and older completed a telephone interview using the Awareness and Beliefs about Cancer Measure. Using the Danish Civil Registration System where individual has an unique id number, we linked a range of highly valid and complete SEP indicators to the survey data at the individual level. This method is a major strength of this study; other studies in this area of research have included only a small number of SEP indicators, all relying on self-reporting.

We found a strong socio-economic gradient in cancer awareness so that people with a low educational level and low household income are more likely to have a lower awareness of possible cancer symptoms and risk factors than people with a high-level education and a high household income.

We find the results interesting and hope that you find this manuscript suitable for publication in the BMC Cancer. All authors declare to have no competing interests.

Yours sincerely (on behalf of the authors),

PhD Fellow Line Hvidberg and Professor Peter Vedsted

Research Centre for Cancer Diagnosis in Primary Care (CaP), Research Unit for General Practice, Aarhus University, Denmark