Reviewer's report

Title: The incidence of and mortality from leukaemias in the UK: A general population-based study

Version: 1 Date: 6 April 2009

Reviewer: Eliane Gluckman

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revision
The description of the population analyzed is not complete we need more information on the geographic distribution and occupation of this population compared to the general population in the UK.

How mortality was assessed it can be dependent on age, type of leukemia or quality of health care. For example it is not surprising that ALL has a better survival than AML because most patients with ALL are in the pediatric group which is known to have a better prognosis. AML patients are older the relationship with poor economic status is certainly heterogeneous Do they live in poor neighbourhood where they might be exposed to toxic agents due to pollution.Do they have limited access to specialized health care?

The authors say they analyzed data on july 2007 they dont say what is the total period of analysis : the treatment of leukemia has been changing over time, prognosis has improved , the analysis of mortality should have been done considering the time period and the type of leukemia.

Minor revision
for the general reader the authors should give the definition of the Townsend score

Level of interest: An article of importance 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 interest