Reviewer’s report

Title: Assessing the prevalence of non-medical prescription opioid use in the Canadian general adult population: evidence of large variation depending on survey questions used

Version: 3 Date: 15 August 2012

Reviewer: Nalini Sehgal

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

In methods: (a) please describe telephone survey in more detail, e.g. was there a database that the authors used to access telephone codes and numbers of households, what method was employed to obtain representative sampling, what is “stratifying by province” and “two stage”? (b) Were there any inclusion and exclusion criteria for sampled households, if yes what were these? (c) Did the sampling include rural, urban, suburban, metropolitan households, university or college campuses? (d) Were any ethnic groups or minorities included or excluded? How did the authors address any potential selection bias: those who were homeless, or without telephone access, language barrier, refused to participate? (e) How was response rate calculated? (g) Were any financial or other incentives given to participants? (h) Any data collected on psychiatric comorbidity e.g. depression, anxiety, alcohol use, cigarette smoking, marijuana use?

In statistics: explain or elaborate the term design weights, if observations were weighted, why and what was the effect of weighting.

In results: (a) Please include demographic data: age, sex, race & ethnicity, education, employment status, urban/suburban/rural etc, any psychiatric comorbid disorders. (b) Please describe number of households found eligible, # participated and refused to participate, effect of excluding certain populations. (c) Did the response rates vary by region, wave? (d) In the table on prevalence, please include # of individuals with NMPOU out of total surveyed, in addition to % prevalence and CI for total sample, women and men. (e) Any nonsignificant results that were not included? (f) If observations were weighted, please include both unweighted and weighted observations.

In discussion: please discuss limitations of this study especially sources of bias with this study design and what measures were taken to overcome or correct for these biases.

Minor Essential Revisions:
Consider moving second paragraph in method section on response rates to results section

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

**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