Reviewer's report

Title: Divorce and professional care seeking for mental health problems in Europe: a cross-sectional population based study

Version: 1 Date: 26 November 2008

Reviewer: Kate Bennett

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting and valuable paper examining the effects of divorce on seeking professional care. It provides an effective and comprehensive review of the literature. It is methodologically sound and its analytical strategy appropriate. Its great strength is the large sample size obtained through secondary data. At the same time that is also its weakness. Because the data is secondary the questions asked are not necessarily the best to get at the research question and it is also cross-sectional. Longitudinal data would have allowed the authors to discuss causal effects and effects over time. For example, it is not possible to say whether the results are due to divorce crisis, and will be resolved, or are as a result of social causation. I wonder whether the Eurobarometer has a measure of length of current status? If so that would be an interesting variable to include in the analysis. The authors are well aware of the limitations and their discussion addresses effectively the issues raised by the results. I believe the paper is worthy of publication and identifies issues which need more detailed investigation with the use of primary data.

The only revision I would suggest, if it is possible, is to include a measure on length of current marital status if it is available.

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