Reviewer’s report

Title: The incidence of all stroke and stroke subtype in the United Kingdom, 1985 to 2008: a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 4 June 2010

Reviewer: Amanda Thrift

Reviewer’s report:

The authors provide a nice overview of stroke incidence studies from the United Kingdom. They found that differences in mortality between regions were greater than differences in incidence. The specific analyses are comprehensive and address the questions raised. The interpretations are sound.

Major compulsory revisions

1. Similar to the previous reviewer, but possibly for different reasons, I have concerns about the use of a 45 to 74 age group. In these comparisons data from less than 50% of all patients are utilised because of the age distribution of patients. This somewhat limits the usefulness of these analyses. Either provide new analyses or discuss the potential bias introduced by limiting these analyses to less than 50% of the incident strokes.

Minor discretionary revisions

2. The scales of the graphs in Figures 3 and 4 should each be the same. This would simplify comparison of findings between the different age distributions used.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.