Reviewer’s report

Title: Interaction of sleep quality and psychosocial stress on obesity in African Americans: the Cardiovascular Health Epidemiology Study (CHES)

Version: 1 Date: 11 June 2010

Reviewer: José Pedro L. Nunes

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Major Compulsory Revisions

Concerning the paper entitled “Interaction of sleep quality and psychosocial stress on obesity in African Americans: the Cardiovascular Health Epidemiology Study (CHES)”, by A. Bidulescu et al., this reviewer is of the opinion that it is an interesting report, and I would recommend acceptance after revision.

The major point to be addressed is the following. Obesity is associated to sleep disturbances, especially sleep apnea. Although sleep apnea may be associated to insomnia, a more frequent finding is increased sleepiness. The use of benzodiazepines has been shown in previous reports to be associated to lower values for the apnea/hypopnea index. The authors stated that “Global sleep quality (GSQ) score was computed as the sum of response values for the seven components (sleep quality, sleep latency, sleep duration, habitual sleep efficiency, sleep disturbance, use of sleeping medication and daytime dysfunction) of the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) scale”, and the GSQ score was used for further analysis.

This reviewer would recommend a separate analysis for individual components of the GSQ score, in relation to obesity, aiming at evaluating a possible relation between obesity and typical patterns for sleep apnea. Sleep latency, sleep duration and use of sleeping medication are parameters of particular interest – to be compared in obese versus non-obese patients.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests.