Reviewer’s report

Title: Efficiently Utilize Worksite Screening Programs for Predicting the Development of Metabolic Syndrome in Middle-Aged Employees: a Five-Year Follow-up Study

Version: 1 Date: 2 September 2010

Reviewer: Armand Krikorian

Reviewer’s report:

The authors aim to study the predictors of metabolic syndrome in middle aged individuals using data from a screening program. Since the screening program is an already established one, the data is readily available and can be used for public health initiatives aimed at preventing the development of the metabolic syndrome. The number of individual records studied (1648) is large enough and included all workers which decreased selection bias.

I would suggest the following revisions to the authors:

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The study data are from Taiwan, which leads us to assume that the population is mainly of asian origin. Specifying the ethnicity of the workers surveyed, either in the text or in Table 1, would be helpful
2. In 'Methods', 'Definitions' first paragaraph, two definitions of 'habitual drinker' are provided and would need to be condensed into one.
3. In 'Methods', 'Definitions', second paragraph, the authors have used ethnic specific criteria for the definition of metabolic syndrome based on ATP-III. However, the definition of pre-metabolic syndrome needs to be more clearly specified as well as the reference to hyperinsulinemia in the paragraph. There would need to mention that the state of pre-metabolic syndrome is less well agreed upon than metabolic syndrome itself.
4. In 'Discussion', fourth paragraph, I would suggest deleting the reference to Barkis et al as it refers to kidney disease and not to the metabolic syndrome.

Discretionary revisions:

1. Title: I would suggest using 'Efficiently utilizing...' instead of 'utilize'
2. In 'Results', first paragraph, I would suggest deleting the word 'totally' from 'Within a five year interval,...'
3. In 'Results', second paragraph, I would suggest replacing 'insignificantly' with 'non-significantly'

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

1. Consulting fees from Sanofi-Aventis with no relation to this paper