Reviewer's report

Title: Mortality among Norwegian medical doctors 1960-2000

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Reviewer: Tim Huijts

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-Minor essential revisions

1) In the introduction and discussion, the authors state that mortality rates between doctors and the general population have diverged in the last few decades. To explain this finding, they state that 'in affluent countries low income populations are more concerned with their mere survival than with attaining a healthy life style'. In my opinion, the counterargument is as least as important: the middle and higher income groups have been increasingly able to focus on healthy lifestyles instead of mere survival. The authors should elaborate somewhat more on this, and preferably also refer to the literature on cross-national differences on socioeconomic inequalities in health. E.g., Eikemo (several papers from 2008) has shown that socioeconomic inequalities in health are not smallest in the Nordic countries, which could also reflect stronger selectivity in healthier lifestyles than in other countries.

2) In the material and methods section, it would be useful to see some information on how many doctors who were trained as doctors are actually working is doctors. This information is probably not available in the data, but surely there must be estimates on how many trained medical professionals are actually active in their profession. This will give the reader a stronger idea on whether it is their knowledge (education), or their current living conditions (profession) that is responsible for doctors' low mortality.

3) The document should be checked for double spaces as well as lacking spaces, there are several of these throughout the manuscript.

4) The way of citing papers is slightly inconsistent (e.g., et al 1997, et al. 1999, and et al, 1998 appear in the same paragraph (discussion))

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 declare that I have no competing interests