Reviewer’s report

Title: Sense of Coherence as a Predictor of Incident Depression among Japanese Workers: A cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 20 September 2010

Reviewer: Bryndis Bjork Asgeirsdottir

Reviewer’s report:

Minor essential revisions
1. Title: In the title the authors use incident depression, while in the paper they refer to onset of depression. It would be clearer and more consistent to use onset of depression in the title as in the rest of the paper.
2. Abstract: Background – the aim of the study is described quite vaguely, hence making the contribution to the literature unclear (see sentence 2-3). This refers to the background and discussion chapters as well.
3. Background: The background provides the readers with limited information behind the main questions under study. A much more detailed discussion of the literature is needed along with some theoretical underpinning.
4. Background: In the first paragraph mortality rate from suicide and self inflicted injury in the USA is compared to the mortality rate in Japan - most likely from suicide as well or what?
5. Background: In the following paragraph important information are lacking on gender, age, cultural issues and measures used for the studies described. This relates to the contribution of the study which should be connected more closely to the discussion of the literature.
6. Method: More detailed information could be provided here, with regards to age and gender of the participants. Also more information on where the study was conducted (region, cultural information).
7. Discussion: The cultural influences need to be addressed here. Is it possible that this study would show different results for different cultures? If so how? The implications of this and the measures used could be discussed in more detail.

Discretionary revisions
1. Background: The first paragraph starts with referring to major depression – although in the rest of the paper the more general term depression is used.
2. Method/results: The authors refer to stress and strain in the workplace and the importance of SOC in buffering against the negative effects of strain. Is there any data on stress/strain in the dataset? The role of stress/strain is possibly an important variable which should be included in the analysis.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'