Reviewer’s report

Title: Weight gain and incident obesity among male snus users

Version: 3 Date: 24 November 2010

Reviewer: Lars Ramstrom

Reviewer’s report:

The revised version of the manuscript contains a few changes that represent some but insufficient improvements.

1). The authors have not at all commented on the observation in my previous review report that the study population appears to deviate from the general male population, which may weaken the representativity. This remaining question mark in combination with the overall low response rate emphasizes the need for extremely cautious interpretation of the data, especially since large proportions of the ORs are statistically insignificant or just borderline significant. Even if the final Conclusion has got a slightly less firm wording (while the word “moderately” is missing in the otherwise identical wording in the abstract), it remains questionable if the data do support even this version. As stated in my original review report, a more definitely valid conclusion could be that a possible effect of snus use on weight gain is too small to be easily detected.

2). The authors have also abstained from taking into account that the possible effects of snus use and smoking appear to be quite similar. According to Table 2 the ORs for weight gain are actually just the same for stable current use of snus (1.04 – 1.65) and for stable current smoking (1.00 – 1.54). It is therefore rather misleading to let the text speak of possible snus effects only, as if snus use were associated with unique risks, while the well-known picture is one of health risks of smoking being much more pronounced than those of snus use.

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'