Reviewer's report

Title: Burden of traumatic spinal fracture in 2006 - 2007 in Tehran, Iran

Version: 2 Date: 25 June 2011

Reviewer: Farid Abolhassani

Reviewer's report:

The article was reviewed in search for probable changes made especially with respect to major compulsory revisions.

Discretionary Revisions: Reconsidering study limitations

The limitations of the study have been revised and fulfill the points mentioned in the review.

Major compulsory revision 1: Redefining the question of the study and implications of the generated response

Nothing has been added to the paper regarding the justification of the study. In their answer to this point, authors have mentioned that "TSF does not have a considerable quota on total burden of injuries and diseases, but there are special groups (both health care providers and patients) which have special interests on it". Health policy makers and managers may be interested in these kinds of studies, but it is not clear that why health care providers and patients should have special interest in this study.

Major compulsory revision 2: Justifying the necessity of estimating burden of TSF as an entity and not as a presentation or a non-fatal outcome of an underlying condition.

No explanation can still be found in the revised text about the justification of estimating burden of TSF instead of burden of underlying injury (in case of aTSF) or underlying disease (in case of iTSF) and also regarding inclusion of burden of co-incident injuries in burden of aTSF. Whether to estimate burden of risk factors, diseases, injuries or only their outcomes or adding up burden of different related entities for special purposes is based on researchers’ preferences, but these preferences should be clearly discussed and justified to help others to decide whether to adopt similar preferences or not. Since the implications that authors have considered for the results determine and also depend on these preferences, the article should include sufficient discussions on them.

Major compulsory revision 3: Clarifying authors’ choices regarding DALYs value concerns

Although it is mentioned in response to comments that explanations regarding age weighting and lost years due to premature death have been included, these were not found in the revised text.

Major compulsory revision 4: Rewriting results with special attention to consistency of presented values.
This point has been corrected in the revised text.

Major compulsory revision 5: Including policy implications of the study in the discussion

Policy implications of the study have neither been included in the revised text nor was any answer to this point found in authors' responses.

Major compulsory revision 6: Adding abstract to the paper

Abstract has been included and appropriately reflects the article

Major compulsory revision 7: Editing the paper in order to improve its writing style and readability

The article has been improved from writing style and readability points of view.

**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