Reviewer's report

**Title:** Higher levels of emotional distress are associated with a higher risk of incident diabetes during 18 year follow-up: results from the British Household Panel Survey.

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 24 August 2012

**Reviewer:** Evan Atlantis

Reviewer's report:

The submitted article presents findings of a prospective cohort study to determine associations between clinically significant (high) psychological distress and the risk of non-specific diabetes in the British population over 18 years follow-up. Results showed that high psychological distress at baseline increased risk of diabetes by 34% adjusted for socio-demographics. After further adjustments for health and lifestyle variables, the strength of the HR was attenuated and no longer significant.

Like depression, determining whether psychological distress is associated with diabetes risk is important research.

I present several issues and suggestions for improvement, for the authors’ discretionary consideration.

Abstract:

The background section could be improved, by describing the research problem and theoretical rationale better; why is this research worthwhile?

In the conclusion, the term “affected” could be qualified; i.e., were these variables (energy and health) confounders or mediators?

I would prefer the consistent use of “psychological distress” instead of “emotional distress” or “stress”, throughout the article.

Background:

This section could be improved theoretically by describing the extent of the problem, in terms of the prevalence of psychological distress, burden of comorbid psychological distress and diabetes, and gaps in the existing evidence base which this study aimed to address.

The presentation of HR statistics is not desirable in this section. Perhaps they would be better described in the discussion section, where comparisons can be made this study’s results.

I hope that my comments are helpful.
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:

None to declare