Reviewer's report

Title: Persistent socioeconomic inequalities in cardiovascular risk factors in England over 1994-2008: a time-trend analysis of repeated cross-sectional data

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Reviewer: Enrique Regidor

Reviewer's report:

This paper cannot be considered a scientific paper. I think not be considered a monitoring report on health inequalities either. The reader is lost among the large number of tables that provide the authors. But this is not the main limitation of the paper. The limitations of the paper are several.

For example, in the introduction authors does not adequately justify why it is important monitoring inequalities in cardiovascular risk factors in England. They offer much information, but they cannot convince the reader of the importance of the paper. On the other hand, they make statements whose significance is not well understood. In the second paragraph, they say that the narrowing of absolute Inequalities in CHD death rates was accompanied by widening relative inequalities in mortality because mortality rates decline more slowly in most deprived areas. But that makes sense. What is so special!

Regarding methods why authors use the relative index of inequality (RII). They grouped geographical areas in quintiles. The average population in each area is about 1500. Has it changed a lot the size of the population of each quintile to over the years to justify the use of RII? Have authors tested that the trend in the prevalence of risk factors across the quintiles does not deviate from linearity? Why the authors have not monitored the absolute differences?

In any case, the results section is the weakest. It makes no sense to provide such amount of data. The authors should have summarized the information presented in a limited number of tables and graphs.

Finally, in the discussion the authors comment on the findings in relation to the objective of the study. The authors discuss the trend in the prevalence of risk factors, but they do not comment on inequality trends in risk factors.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interest