Reviewers report

Title: Mortality and causes of death among violent offenders and victims - a Swedish population based longitudinal study

Version: 1 Date: 6 October 2011

Reviewer: Jessica G Burke

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
Overall this is an interesting paper that takes advantage of being able to combine unique datasets. Revision is necessary in order to highlight the contributions of this work and to facilitate the readability of the paper.

The background section is very brief and does not provide adequate information to justify the research questions addressed in this paper. What is the rationale for looking at both offenders and victims? What are the known early risk factors referenced in research question 2 and how do those vary by offenders versus victims? All of this information needs to be included to provide needed context for the presented results.

The use of a conceptual figure would help illustrate the proposed relationships between violence, victimization, substance use, psychiatric disorders and mortality. Associated text should be included to explain the relationships and how the approach of this analysis.

Why was the sample limited to those born in 1949-1951?
It is unclear how the “Recidivist of violent offences” variable was constructed.

How was the date of the violence and date of death handled in the analysis and how does that affect the interpretation of results?

A great deal of data is presented and the use of subheadings might help the reader follow the main take home messages being conveyed. In addition, the inclusion of summary sentences in the results section would be useful.

The research and practice implications of these results are underdeveloped. The authors should expand upon this in the conclusions section.

Minor Essential Revisions

The authors might consider using the term “participant” instead of “subject”

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 interests