Reviewer’s report

Title: Agreement between sickness benefit data from a Danish national register and multiple workplace-registered long-term sick leave spells in a Danish municipality: a validation study.

Version: 1 Date: 26 April 2012

Reviewer: Malin Josephson

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The study is of great interest for research of absenteeism among employees in municipalities in Denmark. In my opinion, the manuscript is suitable for national publication but not in an international journal. Crucial for publishing is that the research constitutes a useful contribution to the field. The current article has a limited interest for publication. The results are difficult to generalize to other countries, other organizations and other types of procedures for recording sickness absence.

Compulsory revision

The study would be of international interest if it was performed in different work settings and industries with different types of employers and employees and work organisations. Also studies that compare self-reported data with records can be of general interest for research in different situations and contexts.

For publication, expand the study. For example;
- if the same design is used for different working populations in different branches and with different work organization. For example employees in both small and large enterprises, workplaces requiring a high level of education, in constructive work, …and so on.
- or if both registers were compared with self-reported data
- or with more information about general sources of incorrect registration,

Additionally, the manuscript is of acceptable quality. The research question is well defined and the methods and results are well described. But, in this study there is no support for the conclusion that “DREAM data agreed better with employers’ data files than self reported sick-leave”. You can discuss about, but it is not investigated in this report.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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’