Reviewer’s report

Title: Association between shift work and obesity among female nurses: Korean Nurses’ Survey

Version: 1 Date: 15 September 2013

Reviewer: Masaya Takahashi

Reviewer’s report:

An effort to reveal shift work-related risk of health disorders, as in the present study, is critically important in our 24/7 society. This challenge in turn requires findings with sufficient levels of science merit.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1) Non-shift work group, as the authors recognize, was more obese, though differences in background variables. This group, however, showed quite similar profiles to Tertile 3 of shift work group. It is recommended that re-analysis should be made to examine the effects of shift work duration among four groups that include the non-shift work group as a reference. The Discussion needs to be amended according to the results obtained.

2) Height and weight were not measured objectively. Since BMI is the primary outcome here, a validation study, even in a sub-sample of the participant nurses, is needed to make sure if their self-report would be compatible with the objective evaluation.

3) Based upon the recently published principles of shift work research (e.g., Sallinen & Kecklund. Scand J Work Environ Health. 2010, Stevens et al. et al. Occup Environ Med 2011, Hansen & Stevens. Eur J Cancer 2012, Peplonska et al. Occup Environ Med. 2012, Grundy et al. Occup Environ Med. [in press]), we should assess exposure to shift work at multiple aspects, such as frequency of night shifts, duration of each shift, speed/direction of shift rotation, etc. Years in working shifts may be a good indicator, but gives just a rough estimate. If the current study might not have measured other components of shift work schedules, it is unfortunate that the values of data reported are limited in a significant fashion.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.