Reviewer's report

Title: Adverse Childhood Experiences and Frequent Insufficient Sleep in 5 U.S. States, 2009

Version: 2 Date: 5 October 2012

Reviewer: Anna Price

Reviewer's report:

This paper is well written, the logic is clear, and the data are presented simply and show interesting patterns. The paper is lacking an explanation why this investigation is important, a greater consideration of limitations of the measures, and details of sample representativeness so readers can understand whether/how the results can be generalized.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. In the Introduction and Discussion you summarise the existing ACE and sleep research. You suggest that your findings warrant assessment of ACEs in individuals with sleep insufficiency, but do not describe why. What are the clinical and research implications of these findings? E.g., is it that sleep provides an avenue through which these issues can be broached; that an intervention (to sleep, ACEs?) is required etc?

2. Validity of measures:
   a. You mention that the sleep measure could be limited but do not explain why. Please describe if/how using the self-report single item question (instead of a diary or objective measure) could affect the results?
   b. Who designed the ACE questions/phrasing and were the answers provided to participants (e.g. never, once, > once)? They are leading questions: are there any data on how the phrasing of these questions changes responses?
   c. You mention that the proportions of ACEs could be conservative. Is there any literature investigating whether ACE self-report (e.g. an individual’s disclosure or ability to recall etc) is affected by sleep problems or other covariates?

3. To assess the generalisability of your findings, please describe:
   a. The number of participants approached to take part in the BRFSS, the proportion who did, and how these two groups differ.
   b. Comparison data describing how US individuals with landlines differ from those without landlines, so the reader can judge the generalisability of the findings.

Minor Essential Revisions:

4. Title: Please state the type of study in the title, e.g. retrospective/prospective, cohort/cross-sectional.
5. Methods: What are the dates for data collection, i.e. were interviews administered each month of 2009 or a selection of months?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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