Reviewer's report

Title: Depression as a psychosocial consequence of occupational injury in the US working population: findings from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey

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Reviewer: MAX HENDERSON

Reviewer's report:

1. This is an imaginative and elegant study using routinely collected MEPS data in a health-insured USA population.
2. The main exposure is self-reported injury which is later classified as occupational v non-occupational. The main outcome is depression, a variable constructed from a range of self-reported symptoms. A large number of covariates is examined.
3. The authors exclude those with previous depression, include only accidents at t1 and depression from t2 onwards to ensure the appropriate temporal association is retained.
4. The authors found that occupational injury was more strongly associated with later depression than non-occupational injury.

DISCRETIONARY
5. The important issue of recall bias is noted, though the authors could be more explicit that injuries at work may be better recalled, as may more serious injuries. The fully adjusted OR for non-occupational injuries had a 95% CI which was only just greater than unity, and as such when one takes into account residual confounding this effect may disappear. The authors note the association between depression and workers compensation but omit to recognise that receiving WC may make it easier to recall the injury.
6. There is a rich discussion about the potential mechanisms including upstream factors which may be common risks such as low SES placing people in more dangerous jobs. Somewhat add odds with this the authors go on to state that depression post occupational injury may be prevented but do not say how. Further, the associations with WC, union membership etc and the prolonged nature may suggest that a in fact occupational injury with the option for sickness absence contributes to a dependency culture which is in itself depressogenic. It may be that an ADDITIONAL focus on depression would do more harm than good.

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

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.