Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence and determinants of a normotensive blood pressure in a German population based cohort of hypertensive study participants

Version: 2 Date: 6 September 2012

Reviewer: Renata Cifkova

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript deals with an important population of 3,278 individuals repeatedly examined within the Study of Health in Pomerania (SHIP).

The major problem is an incorrect definition of hypertension (page 7). The authors mix up the definition of hypertension (BP # 140/90 mmHg or taking antihypertensive drugs) and goal BP values, which may be dependent on comorbidities.

Generally, lower goal BP values for hypertensive patients with comorbidities were recommended by the 2007 ESH-ESC guidelines; however, this issue was extensively addressed in the Reappraisal of European guidelines on hypertension management: a European Society of Hypertension Task Force document published in 2009 (J Hypertens), which is completely disregarded in the manuscript by van den Berg et al.

In the Methods section, on page 9, there is missing information about BP measurement, particularly the device used should be specified as the results are further discussed in the Discussion section on page 17 and compared with Canadian data using either a mercury sphygmomanometer or an oscillometric automated device.

References should be updated.

In general, it is a good material which needs to be completely re-analyzed, re-written and eventually re-submitted

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.