Reviewer’s report

Title: The relationship between healthy behaviors and health outcomes among older adults in Russia

Version: 4  Date: 26 October 2014

Reviewer: Andrew Stickley

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The relationship between healthy behaviors and health outcomes among older adults in Russia

Minor essential revisions:

1. The authors added requested text on lines 325 to 330. They also added two new references “[67, 68]” on line 329. However, these references are not in sequence with the references that come before or after them. These new references should have been numbered “[43, 44]” and then all the following references should have been renumbered in light of this change.

2. Line 98. As mentioned previously, Perlman is the sole author of her article – so it should not be “Perlman and colleagues [17]” but just “Perlman [17] also found that men…”

3. On lines 280 to 282 it is stated that self-rated health was coded from 1 (very good) to 5 (very bad). This same coding scheme is then repeated when the analytic model is explained on lines 317-318 i.e. running from very good to very bad self-rated health. However, in the regression analyses the categories presented in Table 2 and Table 3 run from 'Very bad health' to 'Very good health'. So, was this variable reverse coded in the analysis? If it was, can you please state this in the Methods section.

4. On lines 315-316 the alcohol units are wrongly expressed for men and women i.e. it says 14 units a week for men and 21 units a week for women.

5. Line 342. Please replace the word “nation” with “nationality” so that it reads – “More than 80% of respondents were of Russian nationality”.

6. In the Results section on line 358 it says that "Current employment and sufficient physical activity had the opposite effects". Is this correct?

7. Perhaps the text that has been added on lines 370 to 373 would be clearer and more accurate if it read something like: “Also, men whose ethnicity was categorized as 'Other' were less likely to assess their health as good or very good and more likely to assess it as bad when compared with ethnic Russians. In contrast, ethnicity was insignificant for females in this sample”. Please consider rewording this text to make it clearer.

8. On lines 376-377 it states that "...sufficient fruit and vegetable consumption increased the probability of good health [among women] by 3.5 percentage
points...” However, according to the figures in Table 3 the 0.035 figure is for 'moderate health' while the 'good health' figure is 0.03. This 3.5% figure is also reported on line 441. If the actual figure is 3% and not 3.5% please correct this.

9. On line 464 it states that belonging to the ‘other’ ethnicity was associated with a "3.3 percentage points increase in...poor health". However, in Table 2 the actual coefficient presented is "0.33". Should this figure in the table be ‘0.033’?

10. A full stop (period) needs to be placed between the word 'population' and 'Smoking' on line 517.

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.