Reviewer's report

Title: Assessment of Nutritional Status and Diet Adequacy in Senior Residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada: a cross-sectional

Version: 2  Date: 20 December 2013

Reviewer: ellen smit

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The authors describe dietary intake in older adults (65+) in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL). The premise is that this had not been done before and was important given the aging population.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

The authors point out that the Canadian Community Health Survey (CHHS) estimated dietary intake previously in NL. The discussion should include a comparison to their findings, what was different/similar? Even if age specific data may not be available from CHHS (and that is not clear, for example, see http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/art-nutr-adult-eng.php#b1), it still would be a good comparison of how the results from this study and this specific age group is similar/different from the general NL population and from the general Canadian population. Although the authors state that their results are similar to other studies in seniors, the references cited (30-32) appear to be much more disease specific versus population based; liver disease and carcinoma, age related eye disease, and Parkinson’s. Reference 32 is also referred to as “several surveys” while the reference cited is one case control study. One comparison is made to another study in NL seniors (reference 20) and findings were similar. This should be referenced back/put in context to the earlier statement that this study was done in 1996. The current manuscript leaves one wondering if these older adults are any different from the general population and the older adults in NL and Canada, and what this study adds to existing knowledge.

Methods: The study design included recruited by telephone. It should be made clear whether this included landlines and/or cell phones.

Methods: Response rates should be specified: how many participants were called; how many participants were deemed eligible based on the inclusion criteria; how many verbally consented; of those who consented via phone, how many returned the questionnaire; for each exclusion criteria (e.g. energy intake outside the range) how many were excluded.

Throughout the manuscript there are sentences that will require grammar and language editing.

Discretionary Revisions:
Methods: Subjects were excluded if they had substantial missing information in the general health questionnaire. Please define substantial.

Methods: For the physical activity question: either add in a reference if this has been done previously, or add in how the classifications were defined (e.g. what was active?).

Page 10: Please define “long term conditions”

Table 3: Cut-points for the level of intakes will need to be justified in the methods section, especially given the small sample sizes.

Possibly too many tables: For example, not clear why table 4 is needed: none of the odds ratios are significant and all of 95% CI are very wide.

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