Reviewer's report

**Title:** Nutritional and health status among nursing home residents in Lebanon: comparison across gender in a national cross sectional survey.

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 10 March 2014

**Reviewer:** Hiromi Sanada

**Reviewer's report:**

Major Compulsory Revisions

This descriptive cross-sectional study was done to explore nutritional and health status among nursing home residents using nation-wide surveillance. This study provides basic status of the elderly people in Lebanon and unveils the health disparity between genders. However, the study purpose was unclear and rationale of this study was too weak. Major flaws in description hinder its significance.

Major comments

What is the purpose to compare the nutritional and socio-economic status between genders? There was no description of the rationale of this survey in the introduction section. Lack of Nationwide study regarding the gender difference does not solely qualify the rationale of the study. Some of the reasons are described in the discussion section, thus the reviewer recommends the author to restructure the manuscript.

There are so many drop-out for the study population. The reviewer suggests the author to include participant flow diagram to indicate how many individuals were excluded for each criteria. Authors need to explain the reasons for exclusion criteria, which significantly reduced the eligible number of participants, which made it extremely difficult to generalize the results this study with limited number of participants has obtained.

In general, it is not meaningful to survey the individual income for elderly resident in nursing homes because they are already retired and their economic status is strongly affected by the former jobs and their family economic status. It is unclear how the authors regard the income in this situation.

In the discussion section, there are many speculative explanation of the results which are not based on the analysis. Although this study just provided the descriptive statistics for nutritional and socio-economic status as well as health status, the authors explained the relationship between these variables which seems to mislead the understanding of the relationship. Discussion parts should be described on the basis of scientifically obtained results.

Minor comments
The abstract includes unexplained abbreviations which are not allowed to appear in the abstract. Also some unnecessary expressions are found (eg. This study sheds the light on this important issue). Be specific to describe the study contents in minimum sentences.

The authors need to state that this observational study was approved by the ethics committee.

For MNA, what is the reason why the authors classified at risk and malnutrition into abnormal? There is a repetition of data regarding MNA in table 2.

For exclusion criteria, why were individuals describing their health as very poor not included in this study?

There are many examples of non-standard grammar. The authors would benefit from professional editing. Unnecessary repetitions for abbreviated words are seen throughout the manuscript. Also, there are so many repetitions for the result section, which is only a mere statement of numbers in the tables, especially for table 1.

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

None regarding this research topic.