Reviewer's report

Title: Rural residence is not a risk factor for frequent mental distress: a behavioral risk factor surveillance survey

Version: 1 Date: 22 March 2005

Reviewer: Tara w Strine

Reviewer's report:

General

This is an interesting paper addressing mental health in Texas by three levels of rurality. I applaud the authors development of this variable in BRFSS and would encourage them to examine other chronic conditions and behavioral factors using this method.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Please define "good mental health" and "frequent mental distress" in the results section of the abstract.

Please include a sentence or two on the question of interest (i.e. does FMD vary by level of rurality?) in the conclusions of the abstract.

Briefly define FMD on page 4 last paragraph of intro.

Please add "or natural disasters" next to terrorist attacks on page 9 first full paragraph.

Please add a description as to why the most seriously mentally ill are likely to be missed by this survey (page 10, second line).

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Please put a comma after demographic characteristics in the methods section of the abstract.

When you put two AORS or two prevalences in parenthesis, please put ", respectively" [i.e. (29.4% and 35.6%, respectively)].

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interest.

Tara W Strine