Reviewer's report

Title: Differences in avoidable mortality between migrants and the native Dutch in the Netherlands

Version: 1  Date: 5 December 2005

Reviewer: Martin Tobias

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
None

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
Migrants who arrived in the Netherlands more than 15 years ago - does this also include second generation born in the Netherlands (which seems to be the case)? If so, change definition accordingly.

Page 10 first para change "..while 'older' immigrants more often died from suicides" which is clumsy to "..but a lower risk of suicide (both sexes)".

Page 13 last para first sentence change ".. late prenatal control" to "..delayed prenatal care".

Table 3 - 5 caption change "..to die from groups of conditions" to "..of death by condition group".

Figure 1 caption change "Age standardized group specific mortality rates" to "Age standardized mortality rates by condition group".

Figure 1 legend write out "Antil/Arub" in full.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Clarify that 'migrant' and 'ethnic minority' are being used synonymously.

Comment on choice of pooled migrant population as the reference population for direct age standardisation.

I would have expected recent migrants to have lower avoidable mortality rates because of health selection effects. Some further speculation as to why this was not found to be the case would be valuable.

Some comment on inclusion of IHD and stroke - even though at least 50% is 'primary preventable' - may be helpful for the general reader.

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:
Nonfinancial - I also do research in avoidable mortality