Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of overweight and obesity on the island of Ireland: Results from the North South Survey of Childrens Height, Weight and Body Mass Index, 2002

Version: 2 Date: 19 February 2007

Reviewer: Ewa Malecka-Tendera

Reviewer's report:

General

The paper describes the results of a cross-sectional survey on obesity in children and adolescents, inhabitants of Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Actually the data were collected within an ‘oral health project’, hence the spectrum of data was restricted to conventional anthropometric measurements. Overweight and obesity were analyzed against age, residence, gender and socioeconomic status vaguely defined by eligibility for state funded medical services. As a result the findings were relevant in terms of the occurrence of overweight and obesity, and apart from examining general effects of age, gender and between-country comparisons the more profound elaboration was not possible. Clearly, there is a need for comparative studies that involve more than ecological comparisons. Moreover, the findings were obtained in groups representing approximately 53-68 % of the study population. Low response rate might have affected the estimates, particularly that there was no attempt to characterize non-participants. Given the study protocol and its results the authors could draw modest conclusions. However, they reach beyond the objective and speculate on epidemiology on diabetes and serious consequences to financing health care systems – those conclusions are rather unsubstantiated. The paper is of a rather low publication potential.

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

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Reject because scientifically unsound

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.