Reviewer's report

**Title:** Smoking-attributable morbidity and acute care hospital costs in Canada 2002

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 11 July 2007

**Reviewer:** Juergen Wasem

**Reviewer's report:**

1. Is the question posed by the authors new and well defined?

The issue of smoking related hospital days and hospital costs in Canada (as well as in other countries) is not really new; however the last publication on smoking related hospital days and hospital costs in Canada is related to 1992, whereas the present paper is related to 2002, and in fact is an update of the former publication. The methods to evaluate smoking related hospitals days and costs have been modified in comparison to the former publication.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to replicate the work?

In general: yes. It is unclear however, how smoking related diagnoses and smoking related hospital days for the various sub-categories of cardiovascular diseases were calculated, since they seem not to be calculated via smoking attributed fractions (SAF). Which in fact also in unclear, since other publications have used the same material as the authors to calculate SAF for sub-categories of cardiovascular diseases as well. Here further clarification is needed. THIS IS A MAJOR, COMPULSORY REQUIREMENT.

3. Are the data sound and well controlled?

As only secondary data are used, their origin is documented well. We propose that the authors should compare their SAF with those from other published studies on smoking related diseases.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?

Yes.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

Yes.

6. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes.

7. Is the writing acceptable?

Yes.

Summing up, I think the paper is adding some new information and it is well done. The major requirement to be more transparent on the calculation of smoking related diagnoses and hospital days in cardiovascular diseases must be fulfilled however. Therefore the formal status at the moment is:

- Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest

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- An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English

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As we do not charge for access to published research, we cannot undertake the costs of editing. If the language is a serious impediment to understanding, you should choose the first option below, and we will ask the authors to seek help. If the language is generally acceptable but has specific problems, some or all of which you have noted, choose the second option.

- Acceptable

Statistical review

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Is it essential that this manuscript be seen by an expert statistician?

- No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests

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- Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

Me and my research assistants are working on the same issue for Germany and we have been publishing on that issue.
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Submission of this report is taken as confirmation that you are happy for your signed report to be posted on the BMC Public Health website as part of the pre-publication history of this article.