Reviewer's report

Title: Inequity in the provision of and access to palliative care for cancer patients. Results from the Italian survey of the dying of cancer (ISDOC).

Version: 1 Date: 12 December 2006

Reviewer: Elizabeth Davies

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting study which appears well-conducted and provides some new and important information on the situation in Italy, as well as general findings that will be relevant to other countries. The finding that length of illness and higher level of education relate to referral to palliative services and the geographical variation across the country in access to care develop the field further. The Kappa values for the relatives' views compared to case records are particularly innovative and useful.

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)
The paper would benefit from a careful edit for English grammar as there are some consistent errors eg "cared" instead of "cared for". The dots in large numbers need to be replaced by commas as they currently look like decimal points.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No