Reviewer's report

Title: Sex and the city: gender and location differences in disease- and disability-free life years, and active community participation of the elderly in Latin America and the Caribbean

Version: 1 Date: 3 October 2007

Reviewer: Peter R Croft

Reviewer's report:

General

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)

This is an interesting well-written and useful contribution to the literature of disability in older people and its effect on participation, using the results of a survey in Latin American and Caribbean countries to address the questions.

There is little critical comment to make. However the response rates to the survey should be repeated in this paper, together with a summary of the range of responses by city and by gender and by age. The reason for this is that some of this paper makes prevalence statements – for example it states the proportion of people in the older age groups who continue to participate actively in their communities – and such figures may be biased by selective response (for example only people who actively participate may be likely to respond to a survey) and the extent of possible overestimate in such figures needs to be made visible by a view of the original response rates.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests