Reviewer's report

**Title:** Contribution of smoking and air pollution exposure in urban areas to social differences in respiratory health

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 7 April 2008

**Reviewer:** Rodney Ehrlich

**Reviewer's report:**

The authors have attended to sufficient of the review points to justify publication. However, there are still a few items which need fixing.

1. **Introduction.** Page 3, line 5. The authors have persisted with the phrase "Only a few studies regarding SES have focused on respiratory symptoms and lung function decline". Yet one of citations (provided by this reviewer) is a review of such literature. This review in turn refers to a number of such studies. If the authors can justify why they still think there are "only a few studies" they should make this case to the editor. Otherwise they will need to use phrasing such as "there have been a number of studies."

2. **Methods.** Page 5, line 6. The sentence starting "The diagnoses of COPD according to GOLD........" does not make sense and has to be restated somehow.

   The following sentence, starting "Further a post-bronchodilator FEV1 < 80%........." is not correct, as GOLD Stage 1 allows a post-bronchodilator FEV1 > 80% and an FEV1/FVC ratio < 70%.

3. I eventually worked out (from the authors' response to the reviewers) what Table 2 is trying to say, but the headings are still very confusing. The authors should find another way to label the table, or include an explanatory footnote.

4. **Table 5.** The authors should include an explanation of how "%-change" was calculated. This should appear in the Methods section and as a footnote to Table 5. Following this reviewer's advice, it has been calculated as the percentage reduction in the "excess odds" (i.e. unadjustd OR - 1) due to adjustment for that factor.

**Quality of written English**

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- Needs some language corrections before being published.

There a number of minor spelling and syntax problems. A high quality English language edit is needed to iron these out. Some examples:
P 1. last para., 2nd line: "..explaining factors.." - should be"..explanatory..".

P 1, last para, last line: "..cohort of women with focus..." should be ".. with a focus..".

P 2, first para, line 11: age should have a unit in years.

P.5, 2nd para., last line: "Bronchial asthma was considered present, whenever..." should be ".present whenever. (There are a number of examples of redundant commas in the text).

P.8, first para., line 15: "..diagnose.." should be "..diagnosis.."

P.9, 2nd para., line 5: "..<80%.." should be "..< 80% predicted.." (and for all such usages).

etc.