Reviewer's report

Title: Health related quality of life measured by SF-36: a population-based study in Shanghai, China

Version: 3 Date: 3 July 2008

Reviewer: Giovanni Apolone

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
None

Minor Essential Revisions

Three points are still relevant in this paper to allow a correct interpretation of results:

1) the difference between responders/included and non-responders/not included. If Authors cannot formally make a comparison of the 2 samples, this fact should be reinforced in the part of the Discussion dedicated to the study limitations.

2) I am happy the Authors believe that interviewrs' explanation had no influence on results, but it would be better if they try to demonstrate this fact. Again, if this cannot be done for lack of data to make this additional analysis, this limitation should be stated in the limitations chapter.

3) In this sample the female perception of health seems to be quite different than in other (non-cinese) surveys; in some subgroups female did report a better mental health, a fact that is not usual in non-chinese samples; this fact should be discussed in a deeper way in the Discussion, may be including some of the explanations only reported in the Authors’ response letter.

In general, the part of the discussion dedicated to the several study limitations should be incremented.

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