Reviewer's report

Title: All-cause mortality in the Aberdeen 1921 birth cohort

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Reviewer: Evgeny Andreev

Reviewer's report:

The topic of the paper "All-cause mortality in the Aberdeen 1921 birth cohort" is completely clear explicated in the title of the manuscript. The authors try to answer a question what characteristics of cohort members and in what degree influenced to their survival from age 76 to age 86.

It is significantly interesting that the authors have data characterized subjects at age 11. For answer to this questions authors applied standard statistical methods and the SPSS 14.0. The methods are well described and as it is possible to understand from the paper they did it correctly. It seems to me that the description of the results is clear and objective (some of result is really unexpected) as well as the discussion.

From my point of view it is only one point that needs in principal revision. It is the first paragraph of the "Background". The authors tried to describe trends of mortality in Scotland from 1980-82 to 2002-02 based on crude death rates (CDR). It is absolutely unacceptable because CDR first of all is a function of population age-sex structure. In all developed countries this period is characterized as a period of fast mortality decline in old ages unlike earlier periods when old age mortality declined very slowly or even grew. In case of Scotland it explains about 25% of all life expectancy growth from 1980-82 to 2002-02. More problematic situation was at ages 20-39 where male mortality increased. I am sure that this paragraph is not an essential part of the paper and recommend to the authors to replace it with some other introduction more corresponding to the main topics of the manuscript.

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