Reviewer's report

Title: Burden of morbidity in an individual perspective - the case of sick-listed patients in primary care

Version: 2 Date: 5 August 2008

Reviewer: Christos Lionis

Reviewer's report:

Dear editor,

Thanks for inviting me to review this paper that it is based on an interesting idea and covers an important subject for public health and health policy. Unfortunately, there are certain drawbacks in the current form of paper that need to be discussed before its acceptance for publication.

Major compulsory revisions:

1. The introduction section locks quite long and the part referring to the Adjusted Clinical Groups case mix system could be placed in the Methods section.

2. This introduction section also is very descriptive and research questions are lacking.

3. Although the authors discuss certain methodological concerns, there is still a question whether a sampling bias has been introduced. The authors are invited to offer further explanations on the selection of particular months in the Swedish calendar.

4. There is no section on data analysis. Concerns are also raised from the use of ICD-10 classification system that is not suitable in giving sufficient information about the episode of care, as ICPC-2R.

5. The discussion section is poor and very descriptive and the authors should make some efforts in making it more constructive and exploratory. The authors could discuss challenging issues raised from their assumptions with a focus on the most interesting and core question, which to my view, is to what extent patient medical records are correct or complete.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.