Reviewer's report

**Title:** Changes in physical health among participants in a multidisciplinary health programme for long-term unemployed persons

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 17 February 2009

**Reviewer:** Hendrik Berth

**Reviewer's report:**

- Major Compulsory Revisions:
  None.

- Minor Essential Revisions:

1) The authors should use the unlimited space in this journal and report in detail about the intervention program. Is this program published?

2) The authors should report details about the specific (social) unemployment situation in the Netherlands and about the Dutch support system. Is the (financial) situation of unemployed persons better/worse than in other European countries? Can the results of this study be therefore generalized?

3) The authors should discuss more intensively the high dropout of about 50% (465:216) between the time of the invitation and the complete post-test.

4) Is it possible to compare the invited non-participating persons with those who completed the post-test according to some basic attributes, e.g. sex, ethnicity etc?

5) In my opinion, this small program achieved reasonable effects. Is it possible to make any statements about “hard” effects, e.g. return to paid employment? Is any information about the long-term effects of this program available?

6) Some typos most be corrected, e.g.:
   - date of publication (2006) from Pedersen and Saltin (page 4)
   - “enveloppe” (page 6)
   - two braces )) in row 6 of table 2
   - delete n=216 in caption of table 3 and add n= in row 6 and row 7 of table 3
   - delete empty rows in table 4

7) Are post-test scores of the psychological measures (questionnaires) available? If yes, please report means and SD, if not, please indicate why.

- Discretionary Revisions:

8) Which Version of SPSS was used (page 10)?
9) Please add the period (date) of the intervention program.

10) Table 2, table 4: please add in the captions the type of values reported.

11) Because of the unlimited space in this journal the authors should consider reporting the complete results of the regression analysis, e.g. according to the APA-style (table 2 and table 4).

12) The authors should consider citing some new publications from 2008, maybe from BMC Public Health.

**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.