Reviewer’s report

Title: Identification and classification of high risk groups for Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis using an Artificial Neural Network based on occupational histories: a retrospective cohort study

Version: 2 Date: 26 August 2009

Reviewer: Yohana Mashalla

Reviewer’s report:

I thank the authors for taking my previous comments on their manuscript positively and they have reacted to them sufficiently.

(i) Major compulsory revisions

1.1 The background is now much more detailed than before therefore, acceptable.

1.2 The rationale of the study has now been adequately described.

1.3 The question the authors are trying to address is now more defined than before.

1.4 Methodology has been addressed and is more much clearer than before. It is acceptable.

1.5 Influence of cigarette smoking has been responded to and I am satisfied by the response. However, as a confounder, the scientist would be interested to exclude its influence in the current study as well.

1.6 In the previous submission no limitations to the study were included, but they have in the re-submission. It is satisfactory.

1.7 The discussion and conclusions are balanced and within acceptable limits.

2. The authors have taken into considerations typographic errors as suggested. The manuscript is now much more reader friendly.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests in this study.