Reviewer's report

Title: New estimates of the number of children living with substance misusing parents: results from UK national household surveys

Version: 3 Date: 13 July 2009

Reviewer: Petra Meier

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- Minor Essential Revisions

Just some typographical errors:

The number of adult (>15 years) fulfilling...

Extrapolation_s_to the UK population from survey data, pose_s_the risk...

Discretionary Revisions

This is now a much stronger paper and only discretionary revisions are recommended.

The one remaining concern I have is that about aggregation bias when extrapolating from survey to population. The authors respond by saying that by saying that concordance of findings across surveys mitigates this concern. I am not sure it does: This would be correct if there was methodological triangulation, however the data sources the authors draw on are subject to the same kind of biases, those associated with population surveys. Certain population subgroups will be over- and others under-represented, and if these vary in drinking patterns and typical number of children then this could lead to biased estimates.

As an example, certain ethnic minority groups tend to be underrepresented in this type of survey. It is plausible that these tend to have proportionately more children but are less likely to drink.

Using sample weights might have gone some way to understand the possible impact of this, as long as there are enough respondents from subgroups to give a representative picture of the key variables. Whilst it is clear that reruns of analyses are not feasible at this stage, I would still recommend that the authors acknowledge this more fully in their discussion.

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'