Reviewer's report

Title: Up-to-date on mortality in COPD - report from the OLIN COPD study

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Reviewer: David Mannino

Reviewer's report:

The authors report on data from the OLIN study, designing a nested case control study matching cases (COPD) to controls (non-COPD) on age and sex. They find that COPD has an increased risk of death and that this is largely related to the FEV1.

Major comments:

It is unclear why Table 3 does not include smoking (which should have three levels: Current, former and never). Also, both age (and FEV1, for the next table) would make more sense if reported in 10 years (or 10% for FEV1) intervals. Ideally, both models should include the same variables (just changing FEV1 for COPD).

The risk of heart disease barely changes from Table 3 to Table 4 (from 1.43 to 1.38). Thus, I believe saying that heart disease as a risk factor is "replaced" is overinterpreting the data.

What proportion of the population (control) - was restricted? i.e. a normal ratio but a low FEV1? This is a group that is also at increased risk of death over time.

Minor revisions:

None

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