Reviewer's report

Title: "He’s only young and he wants to work but no-one'll hire you with a bad back, will they?" The influence of 'significant others’ on persistent back pain and work participation: a qualitative exploration of illness perceptions.

Version: 1 Date: 23 August 2011

Reviewer: Cheryl Hawk

Reviewer’s report:

This is an extremely interesting and highly innovative study which suggests an important new direction for future research into the important, and costly, issue of chronic back disability. I hope the authors, and others, will continue to pursue such qualitative research, which seems to me to provide an important perspective on this public health issue.

1. Discretionary Revisions: I think that the title is distracting and detracts somewhat from the article. I recommend that the title be revised; perhaps simply by dropping the phrase in quotation marks.

2. Minor Essential Revisions: I have no suggestions for revisions.

3. Major Compulsory Revisions: I have no suggestions for revisions.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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.