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: 26 September 2011

Reviewer: Jerrilyn Cambron

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions
None- I very much enjoyed this manuscript!

Minor essential revisions
1. I am a bit concerned about the possibly skewed sample. The participants in this study were described as “claimants with mild to moderate mental health, musculoskeletal, or cardio-respiratory problems.” Even though there could be cross-over between musculoskeletal/cardio-respiratory problems with mental health problems, it seems that individuals with mental health problems alone could respond differently to these questions. Perhaps add this as a limitation in the discussion section. Also, having all but one claimant as a male and all claimants involved in labor jobs may have led to different results as well and should be included in the limitations. Finally, having significant others with long-term health conditions is an interesting finding but is this common? Were their responses different from those significant others who did not have such conditions?

2. The fifth comment in the section on “Claimant as genuine” has two closed quotations marks.

Discretionary revisions
None

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.