Reviewer's report

Title: Musculoskeletal disorders among construction workers: a one-year follow-up study

Version: 3 Date: 1 September 2012

Reviewer: Andrew Gray

Reviewer's report:

I again enjoyed reading the manuscript and appreciate the effort the authors have invested in responding to comments from the reviewers. There are a few very minor points that I would like to make, some of which should be corrected and one of which I consider to be optional.

Minor essential revisions:

On page 8, a p-value of "p=0.00" is given. I would generally suggest giving p-values to 3 decimal places, but in any case, p-values cannot of course be equal to zero and so this should be "p<0.01".

The IQRs given in Table 1 are 25th and 75th percentiles. The IQR is often thought to refer to this pair of values but is in fact their difference, providing a single number summary of dispersion analogous to the standard deviation. The table headings and footnote (and references in the text) should be changed to refer to the 25th and 75th percentiles or the two values should be replaced with the difference between them in the table. I would prefer the second option.

The ORs on page 8 for responding should be worded a little more carefully. The ORs of 1.04 and 1.03 for age are presumably "per year" and should be explicitly labelled as such (e.g. "OR 1.04 per year"). Similarly for baseline MSD prevalence. For the final sentence "...no relation between having VERSUS not having MSDs..." would make the reference group clearer.

Discretionary revisions:

The CI for recurrent foot complaints is given as (0-0). While this is correct when using the Normal approximation, an exact confidence interval would be more appropriate here. This would give (0-13.2). Other approaches for generating intervals with zero frequencies could also be used instead but I'd suggest exact intervals here.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.