Reviewer's report

**Title:** A systematic review of the etiopathogenesis of Kienbock's disease and a critical appraisal of its recognition as an occupational disease

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 3 August 2012

**Reviewer:** simon dagenais

**Reviewer's report:**

The revised manuscript is somewhat improved over the original. Authors have addressed many of the reviewers' comments, but not quite to my satisfaction.

For example, authors cannot simply dismiss discussing studies reporting an association between vibration and KD because meta-analysis was not possible; results still need to be discussed (e.g. x% of studies reported a positive/negative association, which varied from A to B).

Authors still need to address study quality and how each it was evaluated rather than state that none of the studies met all criteria for quality.

Authors should understand that being underpowered is only an issue if no association is found. As this is not discussed further, it cannot replace a full discussion of association in the studies uncovered.

Overall, the methodology used in this review is not fully transparent, leaving open the possibility that authors did not have pre-specified conditions under which each of the Bradford Hill criteria could be met, and simply determined how this would be done after viewing the results to support their opinions.

Authors need to present much more clearly how they would have determined that each of the Bradford Hill criteria could have been met, rather than stating they were not fulfilled.

Authors also need to soften the tone of the manuscript to indicate that the issue of causality cannot be resolved with one article. The strident tone used loses credibility as it seems authors are trying to prove their opinion rather than objectively evaluate the truth as intended.

The manuscript should also be proofed more thoroughly. For example, the abstract still says literature search ended in January 2012 rather than July 2012.

**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.