Reviewer’s report

Title: Low back pain in military recruits in relation to social background and previous low back pain. A cross-sectional and prospective observational survey.

Version: 2 Date: 22 March 2005

Reviewer: Alex Burdorf

Reviewer’s report:

General
the authors have carefully revised the manuscript and addressed the issues raised in the previous review.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
1. the statistical analysis of the cross-sectional study: not entirely clear to me, I guess that variables with P<0.05 were included and also those variables that had an impact on the significant variables? (A shift in 25% of a very non-significant variable can easily occur and does not have any meaning)
2. non-response analysis; the number of days of LBP is not a parameter in the analysis, so it does not present useful information
3. the definition of parents'education in table 3 differs from the methods section (> 12 years)
4. the inclusion of IQ in table 3 should be explained, since it is far from significant
5. for the interpretation of table 4 it is important to put emphasis in the text whether the analysis on subjects with leg pain was part of the total sample or part of the sample LBP

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interest