Reviewer's report

Title: Is a history of work-related low back injury associated with prevalent low back pain and depression in the general population?

Version: 2 Date: 12 December 2007

Reviewer: Radoslaw Wasiak

Reviewer's report:

I wanted to thank the authors for considering my comments. Two remaining issues:

1. The authors are correct stating in their response (3.1) that low back pain and low back injury are not the same thing. However, they do not outline that difference in the manuscript. Perhaps it is worth while doing so, as the background section does use a lot of literature on low back pain. In general, the field is still confused regarding the proper terminology and I continue to stand by my comment (point 3.3) that the term 'low back injury' is a North American phenomenon stemming from the compensation scheme and is not commonly used elsewhere.

2. On the point of including a regression with all variables. There is a substantial difference in opinions between some fields regarding the appropriateness of using some sort of selection criteria to decide which variables are entered into multivariate regression. Methods such as step-wise regression etc. are commonly used in some fields and not in others due to statistical concerns. I believe that the authors should run their regressions with all (or most, see concern below) the variables as it would help them evaluate the robustness of findings - there is no need to include 'interaction terms' between independent variables to have some sort of interaction occur due to relationships between independent variables. The only thing I would worry about is if there is collinearity present between some independent variables - in that case only one variable should be included. Findings from this regression regarding the main independent variable of interest can then be stated in a sentence (ie, whether they are the same or different from the technique used by the authors).

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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.