Reviewer's report

Title: Comorbidity and disability in patients with osteoarthritis of the hip or knee

Version: 1 Date: 12 December 2007

Reviewer: Marjan van den Akker

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting and well-written manuscript describing the comorbidity of OA and the related disability. I have some questions and comments which will hopefully help the authors to further improve their paper.

Major revisions

Minor revisions

It is not clear to me why the authors chose a selection of relatively serious OA patients. Would studying a representative sample of OA patients not reveal more interesting results? The authors could pay more attention to this in their discussion.

When were data collected? In the current Dutch health care system asking about health insurance is not very relevant anymore.

Page 7, line 5. This line is not clear at first reading. It would help if authors first state they made two calculations.

I don’t understand table 5. How are patients who have e.g. cardiac and respiratory disease handled? Not taking into account a third or fourth disease doesn’t seem right to me.

On page 14 the authors speculate about other possible factors, which is very reasonable. I think it’s valuable to add the potential role of social network, and psychosocial variables (such as coping style, or locus of control).

Discretionary revisions

If I understand it correctly, the lower part of table 1 reports on the results of X-rays made within one year before data collection. I’m not sure what the relevance of those figures is, because they only concern a small part of the population.

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.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests