Reviewer’s report

Title: Comparison of breast and bowel cancer screening uptake patterns in a common cohort of South Asian women in England

Version: 1 Date: 18 May 2009

Reviewer: Preety Kalra

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1) Research question is looking at a person’s ethnicity and how that influences screening patterns and yet the authors only examine religious differences between subgroups within the South Asian community.

2) Re-examine data by examining additional ethnic factors including country of origin, language spoken at home, and the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of those in the sample. For example, examining whether individuals are Gujarati, Punjabi, etc. and whether any ethnic behavior patterns pertaining to the ethnic groups influences screening behavior.

3) It is important to discuss how the authors define “South Asian” and more critically talk about reasons for how they defined subgroups within the sample. If the hypothesis is that screening differences both within and between is due to religious differences than that needs to be included in introduction and the discussion.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1) Charts and data need to be presented on the numbers of individuals by religious affiliation within the South Asian category, ideally by the percent composition of all the different religious groups in the sample.

Discretionary Revisions:

1) Greater discussion of what the authors believe is the mechanism for religious differences and how that impacts cancer screening.

2) Greater discussion on differences they found between breast and bowel screenings.

3) Recommendations in discussion section include targeting information to first time invitees, however, the data they present suggest that for South Asian women, completing the first screening does not increase the likelihood of completing subsequent screenings.

4) Have the authors considered doing a multivariate analysis with either South Asians as a predictor variable or including a variable in the model for ethnicity?

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.