Reviewer's report

Title: Changes in mental health services and suicide mortality in Norway: an ecological study

Version: 4 Date: 6 January 2011

Reviewer: H Bickley

Reviewer's report:

I have read the redrafted manuscript and the authors' letter responding to the 3 reviewers reports. I consider the authors have responded appropriately to my points and those of the other the reviewers.

The extra detail on the Norwegian Health Care System is useful to the international readership. The authors have done some useful rephrasing in the manuscript so that it now avoids inferring causal relationships.

The authors have described the methods employed with more detail so the reader can understand the methodology and results better. The authors have carried out new analyses, and have presented new tables. It is useful being able to see the figures in the tables comparing the 5 different regions. The study is also stronger for commenting on males and females separately.

Major Compulsory Revisions: None

Minor Essential Revisions:

1) Methods, paragraph 10: 5th word should be 'data' not 'date'.
2) Results, paragraph 1: 'the number of outpatient consultations increased by ...221%'. This does not match with the rate ratio within Table 1 in the 5th column/outpatient cons. Row. This may be a rounding error, but the (3.22) should perhaps be (3.21), to match the 221%?
3) Results, paragraph 2: the text refers to Table 5, but there is no Table 5.
4) Discussion, paragraph 3: change 'theses' to 'these'.
5) Discussion, paragraph 4: perhaps change 'shortage' to 'shortcoming'.
6) Tables 1-4: don't abbreviate 'cons.' or 'consul.' – write in full.

Discretionary Revisions: None

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.