Reviewer's report

Title: Is the health of people living in rural areas different from those in cities? Evidence from routine data linked with the Scottish Health Survey

Version: 1 Date: 1 December 2011

Reviewer: Sarah-Anne Munoz

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions
1. In the background section it would be useful to make more explicit comment about why it matters to know whether there are urban-rural health differences.
2. In the final paragraph on page 4 can you say why these are the outcome measures?
3. Did you find the SEURC appropriate to your study? Can you make comment about how it influenced the results that you present? Would other boundaries have produced different results?

Discretionary Revisions
4. There is a lot of detailed information about linking Scottish data. Can the conclusions offer key points for doing this in other contexts?
5. Can the discussion section offer comment on the implication of the findings for rural health and rural health services research?

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