Reviewer's report

Title: Development, implementation, and pilot study of a sentinel network ("The Watchtowers") for monitoring emergency primary health care activity in Norway.

Version: 1 Date: 6 January 2008

Reviewer: Paul Giesen

Reviewer's report:

General and introduction
This is an interesting well written manuscript and the first in the area of the out-of-hours primary emergency care. The study is an example for other countries to inspire them to do the same. The question posed by the authors is clear and well defined.

Methods
The manuscript describes the onset of the Watchtower project. The method paragraph is well written. The description of the organisation of the Norwegian organisation is clear and interesting for insiders, but perhaps to long for the most readers, perhaps it can shortened or removed and reached with an internet link. Perhaps it can be replaced to the introduction. (Discretionary Revision)
The development and implementation of the project is well written and I think it is simply to follow or replicate.

Results
The data sound reliable and are comparable with our study:
Paul Giesen, Henk Mokkink, Gerard Ophey, Roeland Drijver, Richard Grol and Wil van den Bosch. How urgent is the presented morbidity on the GP cooperative?
Huisarts & Wetenschap 2005;48: 207-10
I miss information about the contact frequency in relation of the time of the day, but is perhaps not necessary for the aim of the study
(Discretionary Revision)

Discussion and conclusions
I miss a reflection about the future and this need a major compulsory revision. What are the plans? For example:
1. I think it could be possible to code the data (backwards by a trained professional) to get more information about complaint, diagnosis, prescription and referral to hospital.
2. Also an international comparison is interesting
3. Is the outcome to be comparable with outcome of EMCC in the same region?
4. Longitudinal study: I wonder if the date each year will be almost the same.

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'