Reviewer’s report

Title: A review of epidemiologic research assessments of United States Gulf War I era veterans

Version: 3 Date: 30 September 2012

Reviewer: Gary Gackstetter

Reviewer’s report:


McNeil et al compare survey measures across 12 studies and 2 clinical registries to identify gaps and overlaps, with the goal of advancing the next generation of survey tools. The authors address an important military and veteran health issue: illnesses in Gulf War I veterans. The re-written article remains well written, objective, and well organized. Thank you for the opportunity to first review and then re-review this manuscript.

Major Compulsory Revisions: McNeil et al have done an exceptional job of addressing the concerns of my first review and have included specific discussion points on key epidemiologic principles that vary among their selected studies, such as sampling frames and methods, generalizability, validity, as well as the limitations of self-reported exposures and outcomes data. The only remaining criticism that I have is the manuscript’s title. Consider using the following title for this manuscript: “An assessment of survey measures used across key epidemiologic studies of United States Gulf War I era Veterans” This title appropriately emphasizes the major focus of the paper.

Minor Essential Revisions: None

Discretionary Revisions: None

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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