Reviewer's report

Title: Accessibility and use of urban green spaces, and cardiovascular health: findings from a HAPIEE cohort study

Version: 2 Date: 12 February 2014

Reviewer: Paul Villeneuve

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ABSTRACT

“During the follow up, an increased risk of non-fatal and fatal CVD combined was observed for those who lived further away from green spaces (#629.61 m) (hazard ratio(HR)=1.36 95% CI 1.03-1.80), and the risk for non-fatal CVD - for those who lived farther away (#347.81 m) and were not park users (HR=1.66 95% CI 1.01-2.73)." - The reference group is not described here, am I to assume the reference group is those who lived less than 347.81 m from the park? They need to make it clearer

In abstract, methods section, put in age interval of study subjects at the time of inception into the cohort.

The last sentence of the abstract needs to be corrected, it is incomplete “Our analysis suggests public health policies aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles in urban settings” - perhaps add the phrase at end of sentence “could produce cardiovascular benefits”

Section 2.3.4: the “hard CVD” description does not make sense to me? I do not understand what hard CVD means, or what the authors are trying to capture. It is not a commonly used term.

Generally with age standardized rates calculation using weights, the sum of the weights equal one. This does not appear to be the case here. “Weights 1.62 (age group 45-54 years), 0.97 (age group 55-64 years), and 0.75 (age group 65 years and older)”. The convention would be to take these numbers and divide by the sum when presenting them as ‘weights’.

In findings section, the authors state “The proportion of the participants aged 45-54 years in the 1st tertile of the distance to green spaces was significantly lower, and proportion of the subjects aged 65 years or older was significantly higher, compared to the 3rd tertile. The age-standardized mean age in the 3rd tertile was significantly lower, compared to the 1st tertile (supplementary Table 1). – In my view, it is far better to indicate what the size of the differences were and provides the actual numbers rather than state things were ‘significantly lower’. The authors do this throughout the results section. I think it would be better to provide numbers