Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in Metropolitan, Urban, and Rural Georgia

Version: 1 Date: 17 December 2006

Reviewer: Andrew Lloyd

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a well presented manuscript, describing another population-based prevalence study of CFs and related conditions. The findings don't add much to our understanding of the epidemiology of CFS, but the manuscript does provide a comprehensive approach to operationalising the CFS case definition in epidemiological studies.

-------------------------------------------------------------------

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Further analysis of the impact of the operational decisions on the prevalence estimates should be added to resolve the higher prevalence estimate reported here than in all previous studies. The fatigue criterion in the CFS case definition was operationalised as "those with a score ≥ well-population median" - this implies substantial overlap between the cases and the healthy control subjects in this variable. This deserves careful justification and further discussion - what would be the impact on the prevalence figures of a more conservative threshold??? Similarly, what influence would a change to the 10th percentile for the SF36 definition of functional impairment have? or a change to a more conservative score on the Symptom Inventory.

-------------------------------------------------------------------

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

-------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.