Reviewer's report

Title: Association of self-rated health with multimorbidity, chronic disease and psychosocial factors in a large middle-aged cohort from General Practice: A cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: Susan Smith

Reviewer's report:

Review SRH and MM

BMC

This is an interesting and well written paper outlining the link between self rated health (SRH) and multimorbidity (MM) in a large UK general practice cohort of men and women aged

I have the following minor comments, which the authors can choose to address:

1. Abstract conclusion: I think could be more focused on interpretation of results in terms of potential to target interventions within the MM population as mentioned by the authors in the discussion

2. Results:

3. The age actually goes up to 79 (or 74 also stated in text as upper age limit) so I think it is a little misleading to refer to it as a middle-aged cohort – perhaps middle aged and elderly?

4. The analysis does take socioeconomic factors into consideration which should perhaps be added as a limitation

5. How comparable is the EPIC-Norfolk cohort to the wider population – could be addressed by looking at reported anti-depressant use compared to national figures or SF36 scores compared to national norms

6. The authors describe the inclusion of the six conditions as a strength but it is quite limited in number and likely explains how the prevalence seems lower than in other GP based cohort studies, might be good to compare prevalence MM with other studies as well

7. Implications of findings: lines 369-372: it seems to be stretching the point to claim that eliciting SRH status may help to predict mortality based on the cross sectional nature of this data and no other reference to support this link.

8. Occasional inconsistencies in use of hypen in MM – see line 259

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.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests