Reviewer’s report

Title: Diet patterns and risk of sepsis in community-dwelling adults: a cohort study

Version: 2 Date: 8 April 2015

Reviewer: Scott Weiss

Reviewer’s report:

The authors provide thoughtful and appropriate responses to all comments. I have one major and minor remaining concern.

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. I remain concerned about the interpretation of the analysis of the Southern diet pattern with all patients when the authors demonstrate a very strong interaction of race (p=0.01). Even though there is a trend toward an increased sepsis risk within each race stratum, these fail to reach statistical significance. And, because the HR for White and Black patients are statistically different, the criteria are not met for collapsibility of the data. Can the authors provide a specific reference supporting their ascertain that overall collapsed association of the exposure variable of interest and the outcome variable of interest in the full study sample (on which they base their conclusion) is able to be interpreted?

Minor Essential Revisions
2. I suggest adding the additional testing using more granular definitions for covariates into the manuscript.

Discretionary Revisions - none

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.