Reviewer's report

Title: Violent and non-violent methods of attempted and completed suicide: the role of early risk factors

Version: 1
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Reviewer: Alexander McGirr

Reviewer's report:

The authors have provided a helpful revision of their manuscript examining risk factors for suicide completion in Swedish conscripts. Prior to publication, there remain a few issues that need to be addressed.

Major:

It is still unclear to me exactly how this data is analyzed. The response is helpful, but still leaves me unsure what is done, and whether this is the best analysis for this data.

Were regression analyses conducted in the entire conscript sample (as suggested by Figure 2) or were they conducted only among suicide attempters? Do I understand correctly that regressions were performed predicting death+violent-index, then a separate set of regressions in death+nonviolent-index? And then that the results from these analyses were qualitatively compared? or was there some form of statistical comparison?

I would like to see an interaction term or some other form of direct comparison of risk between violent and non-violent groups as I am uncomfortable with statements of "higher"/"somewhat higher" when the confidence intervals are overlapping to this extent. I cannot tell if an analysis has been performed to test difference in risk in the current write up and this is required to allow a meaningful statement of difference.

Minor Essential:

The wording of the limitation with respect to the registries should be more explicit. From my understanding, the data from this study has some potential generalizability issues that are not accounted for by the statement "we may have missed some cases [prior to] 1987". I think that the preferable alternative is to disclose the completeness of the available data prior to 1983, or to more explicitly acknowledge that this data may not extend to younger suicides. Figure 2 suggests that suicide attempts could be identified by approx 1972, but the reader has no means to interpret the extent of this limitation other than the mild change in curve at approx 1983 when the records are more complete.

There are still a number of minor language issues in this revision and it requires a careful read through. Examples include: nervosity (not a word in English), "early predictors time were measured", and others.
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.