Reviewer's report

Title: Use of the life table to compare mortality in ethnic groups in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Version: 3 Date: 15 April 2015

Reviewer: Stephen Begg

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

The author has provided additional information that now allows one to be reasonably confident that the number of deaths and population size analysed in the paper are a true and accurate picture of the risk of mortality in each of the strata examined. In addition, the author has taken the extra step of presenting 95% confidence intervals for some of the point estimates presented, which now allows one to assess the level of stochastic uncertainty in these calculations. While this is a welcome addition, the reported 95% CIs appear unusually tight compared to figures reported by the WHO for the Netherlands and thus need to be verified. However, the number of deaths in each age group / ethic strata, which would allow such a verification, is not included in any of the text or tables. The author is therefore requested to:

a. Submit in spreadsheet format each of the life tables and 95% CI calculations that underpin the reported figures so that an independent verification can occur
b. Include in the methods section a description of the methods used to calculate the 95% CIs
c. Include in the tables the number of deaths in each age group / ethic strata
d. Expand the discussion to include commentary on whether the reported differences between groups are significant or not according to the independently verified 95% CIs

Minor Essential Revisions

Nil

Discretionary Revisions

Nil

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests