Reviewer’s report

Title: Disease profiles of detainees in a Swiss canton: Gender and age differences in substance abuse, mental health and chronic health conditions

Version: 2 Date: 27 October 2014

Reviewer: Lamiece Hassan

Reviewer’s report:

Whilst this has the potential to be an interesting paper, it is not currently presented in a format wholly suitable for publication. Furthermore, it is not yet clear what contribution it makes, beyond the available literature.

1. Major Compulsory Revisions
   - divide all results into male and female. Men and women are generally incarcerated and treated separately, so it makes more sense to provide gender-specific estimates throughout.
   - consistently provide counts as well as accurate percentages (never 'about' or 'around') throughout the results section.
   - make the implications of this particular study clearer. How does it advance knowledge? In what ways does it develop/change current thinking about how to plan services?

2. Minor Essential Revisions
   - in the methods section, state how you dealt with situations where there was disagreement between the assessments of nurses, GPs and psychiatrists. For example, if there were different diagnoses of mental disorders, how did you choose the 'correct' one(s)?
   - reformat the tables to include an 'any' row (any mental disorder) and to allow easier comparisons between the study sample and the national populations.
   - not clear why there is missing data for some table segments. For example, if all of the study group are male, then insert '100%' as the response for male.
   - not clear whether you are referring to nationality or ethnic origin.
   - In table 2, why does age only go up to 44, especially when your 'elderly' cut off is 50?
   - The paper requires copyediting for spelling, grammatical and typographical errors and and reviewing for quality of English.
   - do not use the word significant unless you are using this as a statistical term (and are providing appropriate statistics - p values etc - to support your statement).
   - use subheadings in the background section to break up the text, if the journal allows this.
- change the world 'elderly' to 'older' throughout.

3. Discretionary Revisions
- Consider changing the word 'canton' to region or something else more recognisable for international readers (that users would search using 'Google')
- shorten the reference list and focus on those that are most significant/important. There are too many refs which say the same thing or are updates of previous papers (e.g. why have both of the Fazel systematic reviews? Why not just the most up to date?).
- shorten the paper to make it more succinct and focus on the most important points.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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