Reviewer’s report

Title: Trends in smoking behaviour among Estonian physicians in 1982-2014

Version: 0 Date: 06 May 2017

Reviewer: Stephen Wade

Reviewer's report:

The purpose of this study was to analyse trends in smoking prevalence among Estonian physicians in the period 1982-2014, using data from three surveys conducted in 1982, 2002 and 2014. Age-standardised rates of smoking by gender, age-group and smoking frequency (daily, occasional, past and never) are reported for each of the study years.

Overall the paper is well written, and the conclusions are reasonable and supported by the analysis of the data and the references provided. One exception, however, is the argument for the third conclusion which, as presented, seems to confer certainty that the decline in smoking prevalence is attributed to an increase in quitting behavior alone for females. I would suggest that the fact that there are mortality differences between smokers and non-smokers, and that initiation patterns seem to have changed (supported by both the age-at-initiation data as well as the never-smoking prevalence in younger age groups for females), implies that non-smokers entering the profession is also a source of change in smoking prevalence for females.

I only have a couple of minor suggestions for the manuscript:

Page 3, paragraph 1:

Rewrite
"Moreover, the prevalence of smoking among 59 physicians may reflect the 'maturity' of the smoking epidemic in a particular country declining 60 and being lower than in the general population in mature societies of developed countries"

Page 5, paragraph 2:

The non-parametric test used for assessing trends needs a reference. A reference for Stata may also be required.

I was unable (as an English speaker) to find a reference explaining the differences between the 1982 and 2002/14 surveys, this means I am unable to assess what impact those changes may have had on this work.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal