Reviewer’s report

Title: Cancer survival disparities worsening by socio-economic disadvantage over the last 3 decades in New South Wales, Australia

Version: 0 Date: 11 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Francis P Boscoe

Reviewer's report:

This is a well-executed study that shows, among other things, that socioeconomic disparities in cancer mortality in Australia have been increasing, that persons living in remote areas have slightly higher risk of cancer death, and that persons born in non-English speaking countries have reduced risk. As one who is familiar with these patterns and trends in the United States, it is remarkable how similar the findings are between the two countries.

I had just a few minor suggestions for the authors:

1. As one who is not familiar with Australian Census Collection Districts, it would be useful to note their average population size.

2. Unknown birthplace complicates things just enough that it should at least be noted as a limitation. The fact that it is very highly protective reflects the fact that birthplace is often obtained from the death certificate itself. The authors do touch on this in lines 310-314, but there is still the question of whether this biases the results. If those with missing birthplace are more likely to be Australian-born or English-speaking born, then the birthplace disparity is overstated; if they are more likely to be non-English-speaking born, then the birthplace disparity is understated. In the US, the SEER program recently removed birthplace from its public-use data sets for this very reason, though the percent missing birthplace in the US is far higher than in Australia.

Line 265 - over time = two words.
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?
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I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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