Reviewer’s report

Title: Remarkable increase of musculoskeletal disorders among soldiers preparing for international missions – Comparison between 2002 and 2012

Version: 0 Date: 26 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Caroline Alexander

Reviewer's report:

This paper reports shocking data revealing a marked increase in musculoskeletal complaints over a 10 year period within the Swedish population of pre deployment soldiers. Although a very specific cohort, there are important factors that will be of interest to a wide audience interested in musculoskeletal health. This paper is the clearest to read paper I have reviewed over many years and has the least number of suggestions that I have ever given. I congratulate the authors on this important and well expressed paper.

Minor suggestions and typos: The line number relates to the author's line numbers rather than the pdf line numbers

Abstract: Line 51 I think it would be clearer to say 'Across each anatomical location....'

Background Line 84 'has been found in studies of military populations...

Method Line 155 typo with missed bracket but I'd suggest this correction (95% CI; based on the Wilson score interval)

Figure 1 legend and title for Table 1 there is a typo. 0.05 rather than 0.005

I suggest adding Significant value p < 0.05 to the title for Table 2.

The only point that shifts my recommendation from minor discretionary to minor essential is:

Results Line 192 I think a more accurate statement would be to say that 'Although in general, soldiers in 2012 reported higher scores than those in 2002, they did not reach significance except for two of the five areas. That is, significant differences between cohorts were found with respect to how they perceived their physical ......'

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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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