Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 0 Date: 30 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Gülseren Derya Akyüz

Reviewer's report:

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1. The authors stated that the aim of this study was to investigate the prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD), including pain and medically diagnosed injuries and self-perceived health, in two cohorts within the Swedish Armed Forces ten years apart (2002 and 2012). According to the definition of prevalence, it is the proportion of a particular population found to be affected by a medical condition (typically a disease or a risk factor such as smoking or seat-belt use). It is derived by comparing the number of people found to have the condition with the total number of people studied, and is usually expressed as a fraction, as a percentage, or as the number of cases per 10,000 or 100,000 people. Point prevalence is the proportion of a population that has the condition at a specific point in time. So, the authors can use "rate" or "frequency" in stead of prevalence.

2. In this study design, there is a lack of methodology and many questionmarks about the demographic data.

What is the exact number of soldiers going for international missions in Swedish Army?

Which method was used for the selection of the soldiers?

Are there any randomization?

Did these soldiers go to the same region/country for the international mission?

How about the climate of these places? Some rheumatic conditions are influenced from the weather/climate.

3. We know that, many rheumatic diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis or ankylosing spondylitis can start at the same age.

Low back pain is not a regional pain, it is one of the chronic pain syndromes.

4. What kind of musculoskeletal problems according to the body parts are determined in the soldiers?

5. Where is the flowchart? It should be added to the manuscript.

6. The results are not clear and are not well-discussed.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?

If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No
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.

No

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.

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