Reviewer’s report

Title: Relative contribution of various chronic diseases and multi-morbidity to potential disability among Dutch elderly.

Version: 0 Date: 11 Oct 2016

Reviewer: Umesh Kadam

Reviewer's report:

This is an important topic area and addresses a key issue. The rationale is strong, but needs the following revisions with simple and clear explanations, to the larger lay audience who may be less familiar with the methodology:

1. The data that was used for the study. More information needs to be provided on how the data was used to model the non-diseased state, diseased state, and diseased state to death. As a reader, clarification needs to be given on how the data applies to the statement "Age specific transition rates were calculated for 1) non-diseased to death (total deaths divided by non-diseased population); 2) diseased to death (cause-specific deaths divided by diseased population); 3) non-diseased to diseased (disease incidence)." This terminology then needs to be related to the information given in the tables.

2. The list of conditions is long and more justification needs to be given on why specific dual and triple pairs were looked at. It was probably because some of the combinations were more prevalent but the discussion rather suffers as it is trying to concentrate on the range of different conditions. The discussion needs to re-focus on the conditions reported in the abstract.

3. How does the remaining LE in the tables relate to the disease LE and how was this estimated?

4. The abstract and results section requires more numerical statements on LE.

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.

Unable to assess

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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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