Reviewer's report

**Title:** The European disability weights study: assessing disability weights based on the responses of 30,660 people from four European countries

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 26 January 2015

**Reviewer:** Somnath Chatterji

**Reviewer's report:**

The paper is another large undertaking by the GBD collaborators in Europe to further refine the Disability Weights in the GBD 2010 study in light of some criticisms of that study and also to provide weights that can be used in European national burden of disease studies.

The paper is clearly written and describes the methods and results with an adequate discussion of the results.

However, a couple of minor clarifications are needed:

1. On page 5 on the last but one line the authors refer to the study using a technique to elicit 'preferences for health states'. While this may be apply to the PHE questions, the PC questions are best not referred to as eliciting 'preferences' because they are only judgments about which person in a given health state is in better or worse health. I would suggest clarifying this. In fact, it is unclear if the PHE questions asked respondents which health program they think is better in general, or better in terms of improving the health of the population, or better in terms of what they would prefer to have, or some other formulation.

2. From the Supplementary Material and the description of the methods in the main text there seems to be some lack of clarity if all versions had the PHE questions (as suggested in the Supplement) or only the third version with the 5 PC questions and the PHE questions. This needs to be clarified.

3. While the discussion of results points to why the results match what is to be expected it does not discuss why some conditions still seem counterintuitive, e.g., the DW for profound intellectual disability is less than that of back pain; or that of heroin or opioid dependence is higher than that of terminal phase cancer. These 'unexpected' weights merit some discussion. Also, the authors should suggest possible alternative approaches to recalibrate these DWs and what the pros and cons might be of getting expert opinion to recalibrate.

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests.'