

Reviewer's report

Title: A comparative epidemiologic analysis of SARS in Hong Kong, Beijing and Taiwan

Version: 2 Date: 2 February 2010

Reviewer: Mary-Louise McLaws

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Advice: Accept after minor revision which I do not need to review again

General: Thank you for nicely clarifying the previous issues.

I realise that your principal aim was to report on the effect of those variables in common by 3 regions. I would like to suggest that as you have undertake additional analysis and clarified that there was no confounding or significant interaction terms you make a brief mention:

1. (Methods section under Statistical Analysis) that you tested Amoy Garden as a potential confounder, and interaction between Amoy Gardens and all other variables and found no significant associations.
2. (Results) that you tested for first order interaction terms in your logistic regression analysis for Beijing and none were significant.

Discussion: Do you have any hypothesis for the significant increase in the (adjusted) odds for fatality in Hong Kong in males to offer the readers (is the distribution of smoking across the sexes disproportionate in Hong Kong but not Taiwan or Beijing perhaps)?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests.' Mary-Louise McLaws