Author's response to reviews

Title: Validity of self-reported weight, height and body mass index among adult open university students in Thailand: Implications for population studies of obesity in developing countries

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Houtz,

Thank you for your email of 5 September 2009 conditionally accepting our manuscript (MS: 6807736427323732373) “Validity of self-reported weight, height and body mass index in Thailand: Implications for population studies of obesity in developing countries” for publication in Population Health Metrics.

We have addressed the additional issues as listed below.

### Major issues 1 & 2.

1) Not stating that self-report may be influenced by the mode of self-report (including in the response to Reviewer 1).
2) Not stating in limitations that the use of volunteers may influence the results.

We have added the following two sentences addressing these points to Discussion (p15, para 1):

> The use of volunteers, who may be more willing to honestly report their weights and heights than the general population, may also influence the findings in this study. Further, the bias in self-reports obtained on campus, as in the present study, may differ from self-reports obtained in the home setting where respondents may have access to weight and height instruments.

### Editorial & minor content issues

1) Title of the paper should have “university students” in it.

We are happy to change the title to “Validity of self-reported weight, height and body mass index among adult open university students in Thailand: Implications for population studies of obesity in developing countries”

2) There are still some results that are in Discussion that should be moved to Results and be made into a stand-alone paragraph (the relation of bias to actual weight/height) with additional analysis.

We have revised the text in Results (p8, para 2) to read as follows:
Height was over-reported in both sexes. In normal weight individuals, the over-reporting of height, by 1.18cm in men and 1.13cm in women, was highly statistically significant. In overweight men and women, height was significantly over-reported by 1.69cm and 1.36cm, respectively, and in men and women, by 1.92cm and 1.83cm respectively.

and the text in Discussion (p13, para 1) to read as follows:

The finding in our study of significant height over-reporting among individuals of normal weight status was not observed in other studies.

3) Reference 15 is used for WHO criteria but is an obscure paper. They should cite the actual WHO document.

We have changed the citation to the original WHO document: “WHO (Western Pacific Region). The Asia-Pacific perspective: redefining obesity and its treatment. Melbourne: Health Communications Australia; 2000.”

With kind regards,

Lynette Lim