Author’s response to reviews

Title: Identification of effective screening strategies for cardiovascular disease prevention in a developing country: using cardiovascular risk-estimation and risk-reduction tools for policy recommendations

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Timothy Shipley,


We would be grateful if you would consider this manuscript for publication in BMC Cardiovascular Disorders.

In this manuscript, we combined the use of epidemiological tools in a novel manner to assess our country’s policy recommendations for cardiovascular screening. We feel this manuscript can be of importance to an international audience for the following reasons. Firstly, there is a burgeoning increase in cardiovascular risk factors and diseases in developing countries, including Malaysia. In trying to address this problem, developing countries often have difficulty in determining best practices (based on local evidence), when developing policies for healthcare. In our country, the government recently developed a national policy on cardiovascular screening to address the increases in cardiovascular risk-factor prevalences. In this study, we found that the recommended general community screening is not the most effective, and that age- and gender-specific strategies should be implemented. These findings are especially important, considering the scarce resources faced by us and other developing countries.

Secondly, in developing countries, it is often difficult to obtain hard data on patient outcomes on a large scale. We combined the use of local data (population-based survey of cardiovascular risk factors) with internationally published information on cardiovascular risk-relations and outcomes to identify more optimal cardiovascular screening practices for our country. We assessed the effectiveness, incremental effectiveness, impact, costs and incremental costs of various cardiovascular screening strategies. This study provides a method that can successfully identify effective screening strategies for cardiovascular disease prevention. We feel the methods described in this manuscript may be particularly useful to other researchers faced with a similar lack of local patient data.

These findings have not been published previously, either in whole or in part. This manuscript is not under consideration elsewhere. All the authors have read the final manuscript and have given their approval for it to be presented in its present form. There are no conflicts of interest.

Thank you for your kind consideration. I look forward to receiving your response.

Warm regards,
Sharmini Selvarajah

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