Author's response to reviews

Title: HIV and HCV prevalence among entrants to methadone maintenance treatment clinics in China: a systematic review and meta-analysis

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Response to editor:
Competing interests: Please include a 'Competing interests' section after the Conclusions. If there are none to declare, please write 'The authors declare that they have no competing interests'. Please check the instructions for authors on the journal website for a full list of questions to consider when writing your competing interests statement.

Response: we have added the sentence accordingly.

Please also format your abstract under the following headings: Background, Methods, Results and Conclusions. Please also remove the 'declaration of interest statement' from the title page and please include a Competing interests statement at the end of the manuscript as outlined in our instructions for authors.

Response: we have formatted the abstract accordingly.

Response to reviewers:
Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. In the introduction section, 5th paragraph, the authors should add some information about the limitations of previous studies to the prevalence of HIV or HCV among MMT clients in China. Additionally, the authors should explain the main advantages of this study compared with other previously published articles.

Response: we have now added extra information in the introduction as follows: “Numerous individual research studies have been conducted to estimate HIV and HCV prevalence among MMT clients in China. The studies vary in time and geographical locations, and did not provide a complete overview of HIV and HCV epidemics in relations to MMT in China.”

2. In table S1, the variable title of included literatures is described in Chinese, the authors should amend it to English language.

Response: we have now amended accordingly.

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. In abstract section, authors used “HIV-HCV” to represent the expression of HIV and HCV co-infection; however, the expression “HIV/HCV” was used throughout the main text. Please have a consistent expression in the abstract and main text.

Response: we have changed all the “HIV-HCV” to “HIV/HCV”.

2. In Introduction section, 3rd paragraph line 3 and Table 4 footnote: the name of the province “Xingjiang” should be “Xinjiang”. Please check the correct spelling throughout the text.

Response: we have checked and fixed all instances to the spelling “Xinjiang”.

3. In Method section, Validity assessment: authors mentioned “The following seven items were assessed to calculate a total quality” but there were EIGHT items mentioned. Please clarify. Add more information on how you score each
study.

Response: we have now changed accordingly.

4. In Method section, Statistical Analysis. Please explain why random effect models were used.
Response: we have now clarified it in this section. “Random effect models were applied when heterogeneity across subgroups were found to be significant.”

5. In Method, Statistical Analysis. “Meta-regression was performed in STATA 10” should be “Meta-regression”.
Response: we have changed accordingly.

6. In Method section, Statistical Analysis. What was the significance level of p value for the Begg and Mazumdar rank correlation?
Response: we have added information about p-value (p<0.05).

7. In results section, Trial Flow / Flow of included studies. “… and 17 through other sources”, please identify what were the other sources.
Response: We have now confirmed this as a typo and removed accordingly.

8. In results, study characteristics. “The sample size of the selected studies ranged from 38 to 8662 (median: 300; 95% CI: 363-854)”. 95% confident interval is not appropriate, the authors should calculate its interquartile range.
Response: We have corrected the number in the results accordingly. “The sample size of the selected studies ranged from 38 to 8662 (median: 300; IQR: 175-512).”

9. In Table 4 footnote and study location, does “HPP” equivalent to “HTA” and “LPP” equivalent to “LTA”? The author should have consistent terminologies in the text.
Response: We have changed HPP to HTA and LPP and LTA.

10. In Table 4 subtitle. Change “Pool estimate %” to “Pooled estimate %”.
Response: We have changed accordingly.

11. More information of the establishment on MMT clinics in the Introduction (such as number of MMT clinics in 2010; was the distribution of the clinics corresponding to the level of epidemics / drug users?)
Response: We have added extra information in paragraph 4 of the introduction. The distribution of the MMT clinics corresponds to the level of HIV epidemics among drug users with most clinics in Yunnan (68), Guangxi (68) and Guangdong (61) (data from China CDC).