Reviewer’s report

Title: The burden of stroke and transient ischemic attacks in Pakistan: a community-based prevalence study.

Version: 1 Date: 21 August 2009

Reviewer: Szabolcs Szatmari

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The authors use a questionnaire containing a lot of questions about stroke symptoms (possibly including also TIA as there are questions about length) lifetime and separately TIA in the last 12 month. Data about incidence are not shown, the study is named a prevalence study.

Please explain clearly in the Data collection and Diagnosis and statistical Analysis sections how the TIA prevalence was calculated!

2. The data collection is retrospective related stroke during one’s lifetime that is why it seems forced to look for a relationship between stroke in the past and some actual findings such as raised blood pressure, serum glucose level, menopause etc. Of course these are important vascular risk factors for secondary prevention of stroke. The table 3 is named Life time prevalence of risk factors... but contains data about the mentioned actual measurements. Mean values of these cannot represent prevalence.

3. Please reconsider (and correct results if necessary) the definition of hypertension which must be history of persistent raised blood pressure in the Discussion and Table 3!

4. The problem of actual BP is difficult also because there is not mentioned whether the subjects were under medication, with or without history of hypertension. Please detail this aspect!

5. The effect of education was not shown. There is a difference between male and female with possible relationship with stroke prevalence.

- Minor Essential Revisions

1. Please use the term increased or raised or elevated instead of increasing blood pressure, old age instead of increasing age!

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests