Author's response to reviews

Title: Number of substances used related to increased risk for unnatural death. A Combined Medico-Legal and Case-Record Study.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Point-by-point revision Number substances used related to increased risk of natural death.

A major revision of the language has been performed in agreement with the suggestions from the reviewers and by a professional language revisor.

Other points:

Glen Baker
Page 7 2nd § The authors divided the drugs into legal and illegal drugs. This has been extended on p 7 1st §.
P 8, lines 5 & 6 This question is hopefully answered in the previous §. Line 7 Death by trauma has been exemplified on p 8 line 4.
P 8 last lines P> has been changed to P< in both cases.
P 9 “at least heroin” has been excluded.
P 10 lines 10 and 11 p< 0.52 should be p=0.52 for suicide and p=0.51 for violent death.
P 11 lines 12-14 the whole § has been rewritten with a clarification on severity of misuse and severity index.
The result section in the abstract has been expanded with a clarification that drugs used previously in life are intended.
In table 1 “N=4387” has now been mentioned in the legend at the bottom of the table just as “N = 2350”

Peter Silverstone
P 12 2nd § this § has been restructured to clarify that different mechanisms between suicide and undetermined suicide are proposed, namely depression in suicide and impulse control disorder in undetermined suicide and heroin overdoses. We have also tried to point out that previous studies mainly concern number of drugs taken at death while the present study deals with number of drugs used previously in life, so we do not have contradictory results but a different focus in comparison to previous studies.
P 4 the final § has been excluded.
12. Figures 2 and 3 are repeated and there is no legend. This must be a mistake, there are two different fig one for heroin overdoses and on for undetermined suicide and there are legends.

Graham Jones
First 11-12 years have passed since the collection of subjects stopped. Firstly, Arne Frank retired at that time, which was the reason for stopping the sampling. Secondly, this is a translational study between addiction research, forensic research, and suicidology. We have simply all been busy in our own fields and it has taken time to coordinate, though we find the co-operation inspiring. Still, the methodology is basically unchanged, while we do not think the data need to be more up to dared, which is now mentioned in the text.
The term undetermined suicide needed to be introduced early in the text, as pointed out, as it is a major topic. It is now mentioned in the very 1st § of the introduction.
On page 7 Fig 2 has been changed to table 1.
The terms cause and manner of death have been revised all through the paper.
The Y-axis was given in percent on. It should be within number of substances, that is why the percent exceeds 100.
The Silverman reference is corrected and the name in the introduction is substituted by a number. Reference number 39 Gossop et al (new version) has been added and number 40 (original version) has been excluded.
Ethical considerations have been added by the end of the materials and methods section.
In the original version all phrases that have been changed are marked in blue, apart from what has been further changed in the language revision.

By our own initiative:
P 9 original version below the heading Unnatural death: the § about age is moved up to the previous §. The results marked with yellow have been excluded, as they do not adding to the main investigation and gives the text a poorer structure.