Reviewer’s report

Title: Obesity, Cardiovascular Risk Factors, and Mortality among Older Thais: A Four-Year Follow-Up Study

Version: 4 Date: 25 July 2010

Reviewer: Antigone Oreopoulos

Reviewer’s report:

This paper has much improved, however I still have a few suggestions for further improvement.

Major compulsory revisions:

1. There are very few people (22) with a BMI of >35. This is not enough to have sufficient power to detect the BMI-mortality association. I suggest grouping those with BMI>35 with the BMI >30 group.

2. In the conclusion, the authors state “Improvement in quality of mortality data and further investigation to confirm such association are needed in this population”. I do not understand “improvement in quality of mortality data”, and I think that their study is quite sufficient in proving there is an inverse association between BMI and mortality in the Thai population. The implications are more to do with weight management guidelines of elderly Thai persons – are the elderly Thai people currently counseled to lose weight if they are obese by BMI?

3. On page 4, last paragraph, the authors state “a reverse association between obesity and mortality”, but I think it should be ‘inverse association’.

4. On page 6, the authors report the BMI categories “according to the recommendation by WHO expert consultation with some modification”…this is a little confusing – I think the authors should just report that they are using the recommended BMI cutoffs for Asian populations.

5. Last paragraph of page 6 to the Statistical Analysis – all this is not really necessary and adds to the length of the methods section – those definitions of comorbidities are rather standard and are not necessary to outline, especially since the variable categories can be simply referred to in the table.

6. Page 10, the authors comment on the weak association with the >35 BMI category. As mentioned above, I think that because of the very few numbers in this group, this should be removed as you cannot really make any meaningful conclusions based on such few numbers.

7. Figure 1 does a nice job showing the BMI-mortality patterns. The majority of Table 3, if I’m not mistaken, is the same thing but displaying the actual numbers. It is not necessary to do both. I would suggest leaving the Figure and removing the table 3.
Discretionary Revisions

1. In the statistics section, the authors use a p value of p<0.02 to test for interaction terms; this statement should probably be referenced.

2. On page 9, the authors describe a ‘concave pattern’ of BMI-mortality association, but this is a little difficult to picture. Are you referring to the U or J-shaped pattern? If so, it’s probably best to stick to the same terminology.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests