Reviewer’s report

Title: The evaluation of a nationwide training program in smoking cessation and the trainees’ adherence to a practice guideline

Version: 1 Date: 1 February 2009

Reviewer: Pinpin Zheng

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting paper and describes an important study which evaluates a nationwide program in smoking cessation. It seems that this kind of data had not been published before or that similar studies had been conducted in mainland China or TW. However, the result and discussion part should be improved (details are in the following) before it can be published.

There are some comments for the authors.

1. The title of the paper seems too long. According to the methods (page 3, line 10-11) described in the paper, the evaluation should include the extent of adherence to the guide. Therefore, “the adherence to a practice guideline “ in the title could be deleted.

2. 5As guideline should be a continuous process. The evaluation on adherence to a 5A should at least answer such a question: How many trainees could practice all steps in 5A? This seemed more important than any single step.

3. Page 11,line 10. The authors should provide more details regarding the multiple regression model. What are the independent factors? the dependent factors? How many confounders are considered and adjusted? Those description will allow a more clear understanding for the analysis of the result.

4. The comparison between pre and post scores should indicate the most powerful evidence in evaluation. However, the authors only use a limited space to present the result. I strongly recommend the authors give a table to present this comparison.

5. Page 12, the last paragraph. The difference between the confidence in the short term and long term survey can not be simply explained by whether contracting to BHP. There seemed lack of evidence to support this opinion.

6. Page 14line 15. The author refers other studies to make a conclusion that there may be some correlation in the confidence among physicians and adherence to guideline. However, there is no evidence to show this correlation. The authors should also include this analysis in the result section.

7. Page 15, the last paragraph. Although this is no difference in the gender, age and training year between respondents and non-respondents, it does not mean there were not obvious biases in the sample. For example, the trainees who had more confidence to practice 5A guideline, had more experience and in smoking counseling were more likely to respond to the questionnaire course should
emphasis more to improve the confidence among the trainees......##?

8. The discussion part seemed a little loose and should be re-organized. The discussion should not be the simple description and explaining of the results. The authors should give first give the most important findings of the study, and then present the opinions of the authors that is consistent with the results and may give geographic and longitudinal comparison of the results. Finally, the authors may have to present implications and recommendations that is related with the main results.

9. Page 3 conclusion. Conclusion should point out the main finding of the study. I don’t think it is reasonable to conclude that adherence among physicians in Tw are better than studies in other countries in the conclusion part. The evidence didn’t seem strong enough to confirm this statement. In addition, that is not the most important finding in this study.

10. The writing is clear. However, I am not a native speaker. It certainly might be of value if a native speaker checked this paper for any possible misuse.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests