Reviewer's report

Title: The gap in injury mortality rates between urban and rural residents of Hubei Province, China

Version: 2 Date: 22 November 2011

Reviewer: Rebecca Ivers

Reviewer's report:

This paper is much improved, although needs some serious editing first.

Please number your comments and divide them into

- Major Compulsory Revisions

The author must respond to these before a decision on publication can be reached. For example, additional necessary experiments or controls, statistical mistakes, errors in interpretation.

The authors have responded satisfactorily to most of my queries. However, the increased detail on methods has raised some additional queries.

1. Results paragraph 3: don't need to give all results and CI - just give the top 3-5.

Some of the additions to the text also require clarification and some editing; for example discussion paragraph 4:

"The data are drawn from Disease Surveillance Points (DSP) system which has been approved to be representative[14]." Presumably you mean reported to be representative of the general population?

We analyzed the injury death rate from 2006 to 2008 and the result is close each year.

So we think the results are reliable.

This requires editing for English language; in addition, this seems out of place in this paragraph.

2. In the next paragraph (5), page 9-10, there is some lengthy discussion on elders in rural areas and lack of insurance. This section needs to be shortened, and appropriate references added. The whole paragraph is over a page long, and covers several topics so needs editing. The authors state that suicide may be more acceptable in central China - some comment should be made about how that relates to Hubei province and whether it can explain the findings there.
3. Need to reference the statement about higher injury rates due to RTI in older people due to increased fragility.

4. I would also suggest looking at our recent papers from India for more comparative analyses:


5. Regarding the potential for differential misclassification of injury deaths - this has real potential for bias, with very different proportions of deaths coded from verbal autopsy in urban and rural areas. If for example VA (more common in rural areas) was more likely to code injury deaths accurately, this could result in the higher injury rates seen in rural areas.

The authors state that "Falls in the elderly usually were misclassified as other causes due to co-morbidities, but compensating patterns of misclassification would appear to suggest that the method yields population-level cause-specific estimates that are reasonably reliable"

- this statement needs further clarification - what compensating patterns are being referred to?

- Discretionary Revisions

These are recommendations for improvement which the author can choose to ignore. For example clarifications, data that would be useful but not essential.

Please note that both the comments entered here and answers to the questions below constitute the report, bearing your name, that will be forwarded to the authors and published on the site if the article is accepted.

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: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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