Reviewer's report

Title: Factors affecting commencement and cessation of smoking behaviour in Malaysian adults

Version: 2 Date: 21 January 2012

Reviewer: Hai-Yen Sung

Reviewer's report:

This revision still contains some confusing issues.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The 1st two sentences on page 7 are contradictory with Tables 1-2. The authors stated that only “current smokers” were included as the study sample in the smoking cessation analysis, and an event of smoking cessation was defined as a person who had stopped smoking for at least 6 months. Since “current smokers” are defined as those who are currently smoking or have stopped smoking for less than 6 months (page 6, the bottom of the 2nd paragraph), nobody would be qualified for an event (i.e., quit smoking for at least 6 months) in the smoking cessation analysis. However, Table 2 shows that there were 2,898 smokers included in the smoking cessation analysis, and 434 of them had stopped smoking for at least 6 months. I believe the words “current smokers” should be changed to “ever smokers” in the 1st sentence of page 7. In this case, the smoking prevalence estimates shown in Table 1 and the Results section should refer to “prevalence of ever smokers” instead of “prevalence of current smokers”. To further clarify this confusion, other revisions are also needed:

a. Add a sentence at the bottom of the 2nd paragraph on page 6, “Ever smokers are those who are either current smokers or ex smokers.”

b. In Table 1, change the column heading from “No of smokers” to “No of ever smokers”.

c. In Table 2, add the word “ever” before “smokers” in the title and the column heading.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. I think it is necessary to add the sentence “Smokers include those who smoke cigarettes, kretek and leaf tobacco.” in the Methods section as well as in the footnote of Tables 1-2 to explicitly describe the type of smoked tobacco products included in this study.

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.