Reviewer’s report

Title: Forty years of increasing suicide mortality in Poland: Undercounting amidst a hanging epidemic?

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Reviewer: Ella Arensman

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Forty years of increasing suicide mortality in Poland: Undercounting amidst a hanging epidemic?

The authors present an interesting study addressing the increasing suicide rates in Poland taking into consideration the quality of the recording and classification of suicide mortality data. Overall, the study report is comprehensive and well written.

However, a number of major issues require further clarification and adjustment:

- The justification provided to focus only on increasing suicide mortality in Poland is not convincing as there are several other European countries with long-term increasing suicide rates and questionable quality of suicide mortality statistics, such as Lithuania and Ireland.

- In order to investigate potential ‘hidden’ cases of suicide, the authors correctly consider other cause-of-death categories, such as undetermined intent deaths and deaths form ‘unknown causes’. However, it is not clear if additional death categories, such as ‘death by misadventure’ or ‘narrative verdicts’ were taken into account, even though this has been highlighted by other authors (e.g. Carroll et al, 2011; Bennewith et al, 2007).

- In terms of trends over time, Figures 1 and 2 seem to indicate that when suicide rates are decreasing, rates for undetermined intent deaths seem to be decreasing, which would require further in-depth investigation.

- The study provides evidence supporting the need to improve the accuracy and reliability of suicide certification in Poland and in countries with similar certification procedures. Therefore, it would be important to focus more strongly on implications and recommendations arsing from the study.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.