Reviewer’s report

Title: Temporal changes in geographical disparities in alcohol-attributed disease mortality before and after implementation of the alcohol tax policy in Taiwan

Version: 2 Date: 28 September 2012

Reviewer: Lillian Remer

Reviewer’s report:

Minor essential revisions:
Table I says the average population density is 670 people/km² (0.67 thousand) but the text says the population density varied from 611.8 to 628.1/km²; could the discrepancy be due to averaging aggregated averages without weighting?

The “Rosenberg et al. [2001]” in line citation is still not included in the references and [2001] be the citation number not a publication year.

Figure 1 is unhelpful and confusing. It does not match the units (population/sq km or 1,000 population/sq km which is used in the text and tables, and it appears to be Naperian Log rather than Log 10 as implied. The authors have added text in the Methods section giving the average population density for each 5 year period. This text should include either a range or standard deviation for each mean and Figure 1 should be removed.

Discretionary Revisions:
The addition of Table I reassured me that significant variation in population density does exist, but it would improve the paper greatly if:

1. the table corresponded to something in the text. The table is based on classes of townships rather than individual townships or geographic areas of Taiwan, which were the actual units of analysis and of discussion. The authors refer to Townships (individually) and to central, eastern, northern and mountain regions of Taiwan in their analysis and discussion, not to urbanicity, remoteness or economic condition, and
2. the table included race/ethnicity which is discussed in the paper.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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'