Reviewer’s report

Title: Prevalence of health-risk behaviours among Canadian post-secondary students: Descriptive results from the National College Health Assessment

Version: 1 Date: 24 December 2012

Reviewer: Erin Hobin

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This is simple piece of work reporting on the prevalence of health-risk behaviours among Canadian Undergraduates. Although, there is a gap in the evidence on health-risk behaviour among this population in Canada, further analyses may have provided more sophisticated information.

Introduction

1. Chronic diseases are now beginning in the first decade of life; therefore, may be more accurate to note the initiation of chronic diseases is more frequently emerging in the second and third decades of life.

2. Remove or close the parentheses on line 56.

3. More information characterizing the transition between adolescents and adulthood would be helpful. For example, please provide the average age of individuals starting university in Canada. Also, it would be informative to cite previous literature describing this period of development as unique because it is a period of life defined by increasing independence, first time living away from home without the supervision of parents/guardians, increased stress from school, etc. All of these factors may influence participation in health-risk behaviours.

4. More information about the participating universities would be useful. For example, please provide the proportion of universities across Canada participating in the study. Did both French and English speaking universities/students participate in the survey? Were the universities located in one province or region in Canada?

5. The sentence on lines 79 – 82 starting “This is a significant gap because…” is very long and awkward. Suggest revising.

Methods

1. How many campuses’ were categorized as large versus small? (Please include this information in Table 2).

Discussion

1. May want to compare findings of the current study with results of a comparable age group from the Canadian Community Health Survey or Canadian Health Measures Survey.
2. In the limitations, seasonal differences in data collections were addressed; however, a fuller description of how seasonal differences in data collection may influence student health behaviours is needed. For example, student health behaviours are likely very skewed if the students completed surveys immediately before midterms or immediately following homecoming or spring break.

**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.