Reviewer's report

Title: Quantifying the burden of disease due to premature mortality in Hong Kong using Standard Expected Years of Life Lost

Version: 1 Date: 24 May 2013

Reviewer: Alan Geater

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Discretionary Revisions

1. Results, subsection SEYLL and broad cause groups, 3rd paragraph: "With a share of 46.6% of the total burden, group I conditions..." This may be more easily understood if it were re-written as: "With a share of 46.6% of the total burden at age 0, group I conditions..."

2. Results, subsection SEYLL and broad cause groups, 4th paragraph: "...reaching a peak of 57.5% in age-group 25-29 years and then flattening out with increasing age." If I understand correctly, this may be better expressed as: "...reaching a peak of 42.5% in age-group 25-29 years and then dropping rapidly to [about 11%??] at 45-49 years, and then flattening out with increasing age."

3. Results, subsection Time discounting and age-weighting effects, 5th paragraph: "...the trend for male and females was diverging..." Perhaps better written as "...the trend for male and females was initially diverging..."

4. Results, subsection SEYLL by condition groups, 5th paragraph: It may be useful to remind the reader what the coding for the scenarios refers to, i.e., 3,1 = 3% discounting and age-weighting.

5. Discussion, paragraph 8: "...standard death counts not only drew attention to breast cancer for women (whose rank changed from 8th to 5th) but also to liver cancer..." This should be revised to read: "...standard death counts drew attention not only to breast cancer for women (whose rank changed from 8th to 5th) but also to liver cancer..."

6. Additional file 1: The title of the table would be better given as "Scenario analysis making different time-discounting and age-weighting assumptions" [i.e., maintain the order of the coding]

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.