Author's response to reviews

Title: Significant rise of the prevalence of childhood asthma in Qingdao China: Cluster sampling investigation of 10,082 children

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To the editorial board of BMC Public Health:

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We thank you for the suggestions. Based on these, we have deleted the 'Declaration' sentence from the title page and provided ethics statement in the Methods section. We admit to committing numerous spelling mistakes and typographical errors in my first version of the paper because of poor English skills. This new version was revised by a competent English translator.

We think the title "Significant rise of the prevalence of childhood asthma in Qingdao China: Cluster sampling investigation of 10,082 children" is better.

The following are the revised points based on the experts' advice:

1. **The title don't correspond to the analyses conducted in the study.**

   The study aimed to investigate the prevalence and clinical features of asthma in children aged 0-14 in Qingdao China. The major finding is the increase in the prevalence. Additionally, the clinical feature is difficult to express clearly and succinctly in the title.

2. **The main methodological aspect is the definition of asthma, the authors used the ISAAC questionnaire, but the analyses don't permit to compare the data with others studies using ISAAC protocol. the definition of asthma in ISAAC protocol was wheezing questionnaire. (This like another expert’s question: Did the authors validated the questionnaire in a past study. They stated to use an ISAAC “like” one, has it been validated)**

   This mistake was caused by our failure to clearly express the method. We
used two questionnaires, namely, the ISAAC questionnaire and National Epidemiology Study of Asthma and Allergies in China questionnaire. An ISAAC questionnaire is indeed a wheezing questionnaire. We used this questionnaire to find children who wheezed or coughed frequently, which were used as signs of asthma. Subsequently, after diagnosis by pediatricians, the asthma patients were asked to complete a second in-depth questionnaire (National Epidemiology Study of Asthma and Allergies in China questionnaire) to obtain more details. The National Epidemiology Study of Asthma and Allergies in China questionnaire was formulated by the National Cooperation Group on Childhood Asthma, an organization of experts on childhood asthma in China. The questionnaire has been validated and used widely in China.

3. **In the discussion, etiological factors are discussed without any demonstration.**

Yes, the demonstration for etiological factors is insufficient. Most etiological factors were based on hypotheses; thus, additional studies are required. We have found a study on etiological factors of childhood asthma in Qingdao. We added the aforementioned study in the manuscript (reference 23). Moreover, we believe that all potential reasons require further study. We are working diligently to present credible results of this study in the future.
We hope that the editorial board will agree on the interest of this study. We look forward to your favorable response.

Respectfully yours,

Renzheng Guan, Qingdao, China