Reviewer’s report

Title: Asthma prevalence knowledge and perceptions among secondary school pupils in rural and urban coastal districts, Tanzania

Version: 1 Date: 26 February 2014

Reviewer: Sveinung Berntsen

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

The main limitation is with respect to self-reported asthma symptoms (wheeze) from a “paper based questionnaire”. Do Tanzanian children know the word “wheeze”? I also have some comments presented below:

BACKGROUND
1. The authors blame increasing urbanization and infections as the main reason for the increasing prevalence of asthma in developing countries. What about lifestyle, diet, physical inactivity and the resulting overweight/obesity epidemic?

METHODS AND MATERIAL
2. I strongly recommend re-structuring this part of the paper (at least questionnaire and data collection) in Design, Study sample, Procedures and Outcomes as well as Statistical analysis…
3. Why do you exclude children with known chronic respiratory disease, then also children with asthma? How many were excluded?
4. Please clarify how many children included in the analysis (in study sample).
5. The 25 pupils in the pilot where you tested the questionnaire… please give more information. Did you carry out focus group interviews?
6. Did the children know their birth date?
7. Statistical analysis, what “qualitative” variables? From interviews in the pilot? I assume you also are using correlation analysis?

RESULTS
8. Please give p-values when appropriate.
9. On page 7-8 it seems like you have carried out regression analysis?

DISCUSSION
10. When referring to relevant studies from East-Africa please cite Berntsen et al. Allergy 2009: 64: 1166–1171 (prevalence of asthma symptoms in northern Tanzania)

TABLE 3
11. Results can be presented in the text.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.