Reviewer's report

Title: Smoking in cars in England: a study of school students in an English city

Version: 1 Date: 4 November 2013

Reviewer: Michelle Kegler

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1. This paper identifies correlates of youth exposure to secondhand smoke while traveling in a car based on data from one city in the UK. Given relatively few studies on exposure to SHS in cars, the paper has the potential to make a modest contribution.

2. More detail is needed on sampling. How were the 11 schools selected? Were there differences in the 8 schools that agreed to participate in this sub-study and those that declined participation? How were grades and classrooms selected? Were there differences in the 69% of students who completed the survey and those that didn’t?

3. Add more detail on the measures, including source and any available information on reliability and validity. Was there a timeframe for the questions, i.e., within the last month, year?

4. It appears the analysis did not adjust for clustering within classrooms, grades or schools, but instead employed “robust confidence intervals”. At a minimum, the analysis needs to adjust for clustering within schools.

5. More justification is needed for the extrapolation of the numbers to all of England. Do these schools represent England as a whole socio-demographically? Is Nottingham similar to the rest of the county on key variables? Consider dropping these statements.

Minor Essential

1. Add percentages next to the N column in Tables 1 and 2 for easier interpretation of the descriptive findings

2. Justify including missing as a separate value in the regression models.

3. Missing some words the second sentence under methods—mainly “the.”

Discretionary

None
Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.