Author's response to reviews

Title: Cardiovascular Risk Factors among Chamorros

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Version: 2 Date: 11 July 2006

Author’s response to reviews: see over
July 4, 2006

Dear BioMed Central Editorial Team,

The authors thank the reviewers for the time they have invested reviewing our manuscript. It is clear from their comments, that each reviewer took this assignment very seriously and gave us their best guidance. We followed their suggestions with complete respect. As a result, this manuscript is now considerably stronger.

We recognize, as each of the reviewers did, that this is a very small community and will be not be of widespread interest. However, for those of us who seek to serve these niche communities, the absence of data is a considerable handicap. This study was an attempt to address the dearth of information. It was accomplished with a very small grant, a great deal of students’ volunteer time (three of the doctoral level authors began this project while they were students), community leaders’ volunteer time, and the senior author’s volunteer time.

We appreciate the respect with which you have handled our manuscript. Our responses to each of the reviewer comments follow below.

Sincerely,

Georgia Robins Sadler, M.B.A., Ph.D.
Clinical Professor of Surgery
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Reviewer #1

Major Compulsory Revision

1. We revised the introduction and rephrased the politically charged or judgmental statements.

2. We addressed this question with a clearer statement in the text. We received the Chamorro Directory International. We entered all the names into a computer database and then we used a computer generated call list to determine who would be called and in what order the calls would be made.

3. We modified this sentence in the text to include only what is appropriate for inclusion in the Methods section.

4. The reviewer asked that we remove the references to organizations from the results section and moved them to the discussions section. We feel it is important to include in the Results section the benchmarks for health promotion that have been established by leading organizations to emphasize that the authors have not arbitrarily
set these cut-offs. Therefore, we have maintained them in the Results section. This also saves the reader from jumping back and forth between the results and the discussion to know the established guidelines.

**Minor Essential Revisions**

1. We made “African American” plural.

2. We agreed with the reviewer and moved that paragraph closer to the beginning of the paper.

**Reviewer #2**

**Major Compulsory revisions**

1. We rechecked the CDC’s statistics for cardiovascular disease. The mortality rates for cardiovascular disease (heart, stroke, and hypertension combined) exceeds the mortality rate for cancer. To clarify this in the text, we have replaced the term heart disease with cardiovascular disease.

2. Thank you for suggesting that we add this clarification. We followed your suggestion.

3. We concur with the recommendation and removed the word “behavior” as suggested.

4. More information is included in the paragraph regarding the construction of the Chamorro Directory International.

5. The authors have included additional information about how the consent was obtained.

6. The authors reviewed your questions regarding why obesity criteria based on the BMI were selected and have added additional commentary on this point.

7. We addressed the reviewer’s concern by adding a statement that we did not present data on each individual risk factor due to the exploratory nature of the paper.

8. A limitations section has been added to the paper which addresses the biases that may exist within this sample that depends on self-report of data, the possibility of bias from using telephone survey methods, and the need to not generalize widely because of the inability to adjust the sample for age that would permit a comparison with the larger data bases.

**Minor Essential Revisions**

9. The CDC’s name has been fully stated.

10. The first paragraph of the Results section has been moved to the Methods section and the last paragraph of the Methods section now appears in the first paragraph of the Results section.

**Discretionary Revisions**

11. We used the Federal term of AAPI throughout the document.

12. The use of the term mainland was a direct reflection of the involvement of our community leaders/authors in the preparation of this paper. At your suggestion, we substituted “continental” for “mainland.”

**Reviewer #3**
Major Compulsory Revision

1. We made our limitations section stand out more and have also addressed specifically the points the reviewer raised related to the lack of willingness to participate in the study by 38% of those contacted and the unwillingness of those contacted to report about household income and desirable body mass index.

2. We explained that funding limitations prevented the recruitment of a larger sample size.

3. We added to the discussion section a brief discourse about the lesson for the international scientific society.

Minor Revision

4. The first five lines of the Results section have been moved to the Methods section.

5. The first lines within the BMI results section now appears in the final paragraph of the Methods section.

6. We addressed this recommendation in the results section under physical activity.

7. In the Results section for Weight Management, we addressed how 5% can both try to lose weight and maintain weight at the same time.