Author’s response to reviews

Title: Changes of the Prescription of Hormone Therapy in Menopausal Women: An Observational Study in Taiwan

Authors:

Weng-Foung Huang (huang@ym.edu.tw)
Yi-Wen Tsai (ivytsai@nhri.org.tw)
Fei-Yuan Hsiao (d49207002@ym.edu.tw)
Wen-Chun Liu (cute57kimo@yahoo.com.tw)

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
RE: Changes of Hormone Replacement Therapy in Menopausal Women in Taiwan: An Observational Study

Dear Editor Puebla:

Please find attached file with the revised version of our manuscript entitled “Changes of Hormone Replacement Therapy in Menopausal Women in Taiwan: An Observational Study”

Thank you for providing us with this chance to revise the paper and we are very grateful for the reviewer’s helpful comments on reorganizing our paper. We appreciate the time and effort you spent helping us with our article. We have tried to revise our paper and answer questions brought up by the reviewers. We summarize the major modifications as follows:

First, as suggested by the reviewer, we modified the second column of table 3 to provide information on the proportions of outpatient visits with a prescription of MHT in each category. We hoped the modification will provide a more comprehensive picture of our study subjects and satisfy the reviewers and the editors.

Second, we have further consulted epidemiologists and statisticians to confirm our methodology of the analyses. We kept three logistic regression models, including two interaction models, in our study as suggested by other reviewers. Interaction models
were used to explore the association of the period (before and after the release of WHI report) and the prescription of HRT in different categories of level of education and the level of medical care institutions. In order to reduce the effect of repeated measurements, we estimated logistic regressions using random-effect model. We also provide our previous publication using identical statistical model as a reference.

The revised manuscript is a much stronger paper as a result of the reviewer’s suggestions. We hope that the changes that we have made will satisfy the reviewers and the editors.
Reviewer A: COMMENTS FOR AUTHOR/S

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Title: Changes of Hormone Replacement Therapy in Menopausal Women in Taiwan: An Observational Study.

Author(s): Weng-Foung Huang, Yi-Wen Tsai, Fei-Yuan Hsiao, and Wen-Chun Liu

Question posed by the authors

The work has clearly improved but precisions are needed concerning the results of the logistic regressions.

1. Table 3 is still difficult to understand. Percentages in the second column of table 3 are not completely informative. Percentages giving information for the reader are the proportions of outpatient visits with a prescription of MHT in each category (and not percentages of outpatient visits in each category). Actually, these percentages give information, without adjustment on other variables, of the association between for instance WHI, or type of medical institution, and prescription of MHT.

As suggested by the reviewer, we have modified the second column of table 3 to provide information on the proportions of outpatient visits with a prescription of MHT in each category. We hoped the modification will provide a more comprehensive picture of our study subjects and satisfy the reviewers and the editors.

2. The results given for model 3 are confusing : it is not correct to test for an interaction between variable X (for instance type of institution) and variable Y (publication of the WHI), and to give the OR corresponding to the simple effect of variable X (type of institution) in the model including the interaction between these two variables. It is still difficult to understand the meaning of the ORs presented for the interactions: OR= 6.25 (model 3, «WHI effect on metropolitan hospital»: does it mean that after the WHI the probability of having a prescription increases in metropolitan hospital and decreases in academic medical center?

We have further consulted epidemiologists and statisticians to evaluate methods used in our study. In this section, three logistic regression models, including two interaction models, were kept in our study. Interaction models were used to explore the association of the period (before and after the release of WHI report) and the prescription of HRT in different categories of level of education and the level of
medical care institutions as suggested by other reviewers.

A linear function of the coefficient was estimated and tested in these models with the interaction terms. Other covariates were also included in these models. However, in order to simplify interpretation, we showed the effect of publication of the WHI on the four types of hospital instead of the interaction terms. Also, we showed the effect of publication of the WHI on the five categories of level of women education instead of the interaction terms.

In our study, metropolitan hospitals were more likely to prescribe MHT than other medical care institutions after the release of WHI report (Model 3; OR 6.25; 95% CI 2.08-18.72). And, academic medical centers were less likely to prescribe MHT than other medical care institutions after the release of WHI report (Model 3; OR 0.15; 95% CI 0.34-0.63)

In addition, we provided our previous publication using identical statistical models as a reference to further illustrate our statistical models.


3. It would be interesting to have the percentages outpatient visits with a prescription of MHT, before and after WHI, stratified on the type of institution (even if these results do not take into account other variables).

As suggested by the reviewer, we have added the information for the percentages of outpatient visits with a prescription of MHT, before and after WHI, stratified on the type of institution in table 2. We hoped the modification will provide a more comprehensive picture of our study subjects and satisfy the reviewers and the editors.
It is impossible to express how much we really appreciate the reviewer’s very thorough and thoughtful review of our paper. His/her opinions and valuable suggestions inspired us to think the whole paper over carefully, painfully cut out a lot of background research that helped us in the beginning but did not belong in the paper, re-evaluated our choice of statistical methods and re-ran our analysis, substantially reorganized the text and sharpen its focus. His/her comments went beyond the call of duty, and, therefore, we feel we owe him and you, the editor, our best response. I believe and hope that you will find this paper much better and quite suitable for publication.

Sincerely yours,

Weng-Foung Huang, Ph.D.
(On behalf of all authors)
Institutes of Health and Welfare Policy
National Yang-Ming University,
Taipei, Taiwan