Reviewer’s report

Title: Population Mortality during the Outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in Toronto

Version: 1 Date: 21 December 2006

Reviewer: Shan-Chwen Chang

Reviewer’s report:

General
The authors report the study results of mortality in Greater Toronto and the other area of Ontario before, during, and after SARS outbreak in 2003, in comparison with those of 2001 and 2002. They found there was no significant change of mortality in 2003 under the condition of special infection control procedures, which resulted into widespread reduction of the access to various medical services. This study is quite straightforward.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

(1) Figure 1 and Figure 2 are totally the same. There must be some mistakes in preparation of the manuscript.
(2) Page 7, in “Mortality Rates” section, the authors described that they calculate weekly age- and sex-specific mortality rate. But there was no any sex-specific mortality rate data shown in the results.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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'