Reviewer's report

Title: Does economic development contribute to sex differences in ischaemic heart disease mortality? Hong Kong as a natural experiment using a case-control study

Version: 1 Date: 28 August 2007

Reviewer: Barbara Yawn

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an important topic and the natural experiment is a nice one to use. The division of ages at 74/75 is somewhat uncomfortable since this seems old. Most men have had an event by age 65 to 70 and the life expectancy of those in this age group is not 80 or 90. I would have been more comfortable with a cut at 64/65 or more justification of why cut later.

A nice discussion of why most of the other variables were used and why choices were made and why.

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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

The exact grouping of the data for use in the regression models is not entirely clear. The age adjustment categoriers need to be better defined as do other categories. Did you use a single term for age category? Is there linearity throughout the age categories.

Please justify why an unmatched analysis was chosen? To assure that this is of not concern could you stratify by age and show the results as confirming your current results?

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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

The term on page 2 of "economic backwater" would not seem appropriate in a medical publication. "economically disadvantaged"???

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.