Author's response to reviews

Title: Multilevel analysis of HIV related risk behaviors among heroin users in a low prevalence population

Authors:

Huizhen Li (fallenkerry@hotmail.com)
William Goggins (wgoggins@cuhk.edu.hk)
Shui Shan Lee (sslee@cuhk.edu.hk)

Version: 4 Date: 2 February 2009

Author's response to reviews: see over
The Editor  
BMC Public Health  

Dear Editor  

**Multilevel analysis of HIV related risk behaviours among injecting drug users in a low prevalence community**  

I refer to our submission of the above manuscript to BMC Public Health. In accordance with the comments of the reviewers, we have revised the article. Some parts of the manuscript have been completely rewritten. Statement on the study’s compliance with the Declaration of Helsinki has been added, alongside description on institutional approval. Our responses to the respective reviewers’ reports are explained on the following pages.

On behalf of all authors, I confirm again that the revised manuscript has not been published elsewhere, and is not currently under the consideration of any publication.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank you and the reviewers for the useful comments.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Shui Shan LEE  
Corresponding author
RESPONSES TO REVIEWERS’ COMMENTS

Dr. William Zule

1. Major compulsory revisions
   In accordance with the advice of both reviewers, four separate analysis models have been constructed to assess prediction of the risk of heroin injection, needle sharing, multiple sex partners and unprotected sex, replacing the original model of focusing on risk score.

2. Minor compulsory revisions
   The time frame (12 months) has been added to the manuscript and the difference of income level has been defined in the manuscript

3. Discretionary revisions
   General percentage and odds ratio have been adjusted to the desired decimal points.

Dr. Ricky Bluthethal

Major compulsory revisions

1) The manuscript has been revised to incorporate additional information about the limitation of census data, and the role of methadone in context of HIV rate and risk. The suggested article has been added to the reference in support of the discussion.

2) and 3) Taking the reference from Kral, Strathdee and Bluthethal’s articles, four analysis models have been created to predict the risk of heroin injection, needle sharing, multiple sex partner and unprotected sex, replacing our original method of focusing on a composite risk score.

Minor compulsory revisions

1) The abstract has been revised.
2) The 2nd paragraph in Methods has been modified as suggested.
3) The age categories have been revised.
4) Sex related risks have been analyzed separately as explained under “Major compulsory revisions”
5) Reference has been added to support the description of the HIV situation in IDU in the territory.