Reviewer’s report

Title: The development of an Evaluation Framework for Injury Surveillance Systems

Version: 1 Date: 30 December 2008

Reviewer: Sara P Farchi

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

General comment:

This paper deals with an important public health aspect, the evaluation of an injury surveillance system (ISS). ISS are poorly developed all over the world while it is urgent to define prevention activities, to monitor them and finally to evaluate these interventions.

The paper is well written but I would suggest to shorten it, especially on the method section, while it would be very useful to add examples from the literature, especially in the result section.

Here my specific comments:

The first paragraph reports very old citations, there are more recent examples of ISS based on hospital data, especially on emergency department files, these should be cited.

Some examples:

Rosman DL, Knuiman MW.
A comparison of hospital and police road injury data.

Rosman DL.
The western australian road injury database (1987-1996): ten years of linked police, hospital and death records of road crashes and injuries.

Road traffic injuries in Lazio, Italy: a descriptive analysis from an emergency department-based surveillance system.

Cercarelli LR, Rosman DL, Ryan GA.
Comparison of accident and emergency with police road injury data.

Unintentional home injuries reported by an emergency-based surveillance system:
incidence, hospitalisation rate and mortality.

Plasència A, Borrell C.
Population-based study of emergency department admissions and deaths from injuries in Barcelona, Spain: incidence, causes and severity.

Odero WW, Tierney WM, Einterz RM, Mungai S.
Using an electronic medical record system to describe injury epidemiology and health care utilization at an inner-city hospital in Indiana.

Methods:
page 4, line 2: specify which criteria were used.

Stage 3 needs to be shorten and need to be clearer. It is hard to read and to understand if the reader doesn’t know nothing about the Delphi approach. In the result section there’s a sentence on Delphi study aim, I think it should be moved here.

Stage 4. I noted that literature in injury field does not include other unintentional injuries, such as home and leisure one (with the exception of sport injuries).

Results
As I wrote above, I think that the result section would be easier to read if some examples were described.
Also, tables are too much, it would be a opportunity to insert some of them in an appendix (especially those on first stages of the study).

I would be interesting to give an example of application of the EFISS in some existing surveillance systems, especially adapting it to hospital based surveillance systems (widely used).

Discussion
I think that the discussion section should present briefly what is present at the moment as ISS. In particular results of a pilot application of this evaluation
method.

Limits are well-written, but I’m convinced that the limitation of having local panel of experts is a big limitation also if they worked abroad. Perhaps authors should test this method using an international panel. It could be added in the discussion as a future step.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'