Reviewer's report

Title: Home Exposure to Arabian Incense (Bakhour) and Asthma Symptoms in Children: A Community Survey in Two Regions in Oman

Version: 3 Date: 21 January 2009

Reviewer: Hanaa Banjar

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

In the abstract, the background paragraph: needs to add the aim of the study as mentioned and corrected in the introduction “whether exposure to bakhour contribute to the prevalence of asthma and its symptoms in Omani children by comparing two Omani regions with different prevalence of asthma”

Discussion: is still very long and it could be shortened, the following paragraph can be deleted:

1. Pag 12, paragraph 2 “Several other studies from Asian populations, where different types of incense……………… reported no significant difference in the use of bakhour between cases and control.(22)” as references have been mentioned and the comparisons were mainly for Arabian tradition or the Gulf areas and not China.

2. Page 13 paragraph 2 “The mechanisms by which bakhour provokes respiratory…………… Incense burning has also been reported as a risk factor for elevated cord blood IgE.(12)” as the same findings were mentioned in the introduction.

3. Page 13, paragraph 3 “In ISAAC studies, current asthma is defined by wheeze in the past 12 months (current wheeze)……… of asthma risk factors were evaluated”.

Title of figure 1 has been deleted needs to put it back and to add a legend to mention the value of the ( star sign * ).

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'