Author's response to reviews

Title: The effect of smoking status on healthcare utilisation and costs: results from the population-based KORA F4 study

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Dear editors,

We wish to submit the following manuscript

**The effect of smoking status on healthcare utilisation and costs: results from the population-based KORA F4 study**

for publication in your journal.

Smoking is one of the most important public health problems today and smoking-related morbidity has considerable financial consequences for societies. For an optimal allocation of scarce resources in healthcare systems, further evidence on the economic consequences of smoking is needed.

Existing studies for Germany that examine the impact of smoking on healthcare costs relied on a top-down approach based on aggregated data and used attributable mortality risks for attributing morbidity. However, mortality risks may differ from morbidity risks and from the utilisation risk in the population at the time of sampling. In contrast, our study applied a bottom-up approach based on individual data, which allows calculating excess costs considering the entire spectrum of disease consequences associated with smoking.

We think that this article would be of high interest to your readers, as it provides information for the assessment of the economic burden of smoking. We found that compared with never smokers, total annual excess costs amount to about €740 per current smoker and to more than €1100 per former smoker, which highlights the importance of smoking prevention. Our results also show that recent studies based on top-down approaches may have underestimated healthcare costs of smoking substantially.

We assure you that all of the authors stated contributed significantly to the paper, and that the final version of the paper has also been seen and approved by all authors in an internal review process. Also, neither the article nor any of its essentials has been published or is submitted for publication elsewhere.

On September 12th, a description of KORA data availability was amended to the acknowledgement section.

We would be glad if the manuscript was considered for publication in your journal.

Yours sincerely,

Margarethe Wacker