Reviewer’s report

Title: A community-based cluster randomized survey of noncommunicable disease and risk factors in a peri-urban shantytown in Lima, Peru

Version: 2 Date: 13 November 2013

Reviewer: José E Hagan

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript by Heitzinger et al is a well-written and well-designed survey of residents of a peri-urban slum to determine prevalence and demographic risk factors for noncommunicable disease. This study provides information to help fill an important gap in available information about the health concerns of residents of informal settlements.

Minor Essential Revisions

1) The authors report that in 142 adults surveyed, 70% were female (as reported in the abstract – 69% is reported in the text), and that females were significantly more likely to participate. However, information is not provided about the makeup of the community from which participants were drawn [age structure, gender, income], that would allow a reader to assess the representativeness of the sample. Alternatively, it would be helpful to see a table describing the basic characteristics of those individuals who were randomized for participation, stratified by whether they accepted or not.

2) Page 6 – 7: Diabetes is defined as self-reported condition OR possession of diabetes medication, however Hypertension is defined as self-reported AND possession of medication. This is presumably typographical but should be clarified.

Discretionary Revisions

1) Design effect due to the clustered sampling strategy was used in sample size calculation, however it is not clear if the confidence intervals presented in the manuscript are also adjusted for the design effect. Consider discussing this as this design would reduce the precision of your estimates.

2) The presumably poor representativeness of the consenting participants may merit further mention in the discussion, as well as consideration as to possible reasons for the low acceptability of the survey among specific demographic groups.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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.