Author's response to reviews

Title: Validating physician review and probabilistic modelling (InterVA) approaches to verbal autopsy interpretation using hospital causes of adult deaths

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Kate Muller,
Population Health Metrics Journal,
c/o BioMed Central,
236 Gray's Inn Road
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17th June 2011

Dear Dr Muller,

Re: Our submission “Validating physician review and probabilistic modelling (InterVA) approaches to verbal autopsy interpretation using hospital causes of adult death.”

Many thanks for allowing us the opportunity to present a revised version of our manuscript.

We have addressed your last comments as follows:
1. Please add to the discussion explicit reference to the fact that the kappa analysis suggests PCVA performs better than InterVA.

We have replaced part of the paragraph that reads “show that both methods generate consistently the same top five causes of adult death in Kilifi. While agreement is better for PR, the speed with which the InterVA generates the results without loss of accuracy in predicting the top five causes of death is desirable” in the discussion with “The kappa statistics obtained in the current study (κ=0.32 for InterVA, κ=0.52 for PR and κ>0.40 overall) suggests that PR performs better than the InterVA”

2. Please mention the kappa values in the abstract.

We have added “PR versus HCOD yielded a higher kappa value (κ=0.52, 95% CI: 0.48-0.54) than the InterVA versus HCOD which yielded a kappa (κ) value of 0.32 (95% CI: 0.30-0.38)” into the abstract.

Conclusion
We appreciate the editorial comments and hope you will find the revised version acceptable for publication in Population Health Metrics Journal. We look forward to your positive response.
With kind regards,

Yours sincerely

Dr. Evasius Bauni.