Author’s response to reviews

Title: Elevated Blood Pressure Level Based on 2017 ACC/AHA Guideline in Relation to Stroke Risk in Rural Areas of Liaoning Province

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear reviewers and editors,

Thanks for your decisions and advices. We have considered all reviewer’s comments and queries and tried our best to revise the article (No. BCAR-D-18-00404R3). Now, I will item all changes made, or my explanations, in response to each of the reviewers’ and editors’ comments. Major revised contents had been colored red in revised article.

Response to the reviewers’ and editors’ comments

Manuscript Number: BCAR-D-18-00404R3

Title: Elevated Blood Pressure Level Based on 2017 ACC/AHA Guideline in Relation to Stroke Risk in Rural Areas of Liaoning Province

Research Square (Reviewer 3): "STATISTICAL REVIEWER ASSESSMENT:"
Is the study design appropriate for the research question (considering whether the analyzed population accurately reflects the design and whether you see any problems with control/comparison groups, e.g., likely confounders)?

Yes - overall design, population, and control groups are appropriate

Are methodologies adequate and well implemented (considering whether assumptions are addressed and whether analyses are robust)?

Yes - methodologies are adequate and well implemented, assumptions are addressed, analysis is robust

Are the analyses adequately communicated (considering whether reporting details are adequate and whether figures and tables are well labeled and described)?

No - there are minor issues

Does the interpretation accurately reflect the analyses without overstatement (considering whether limitations/bias are acknowledged and whether accurate descriptors, e.g., 'significant', are used)?

Yes - interpretation accurately reflects analyses, limitations/bias are acknowledged, accurate descriptors are used

Could an appropriately REVISED version of this work represent a statistically sound contribution?

Probably - with minor revisions

Comment 1:

STATISTICAL REVIEWER COMMENTS:

The authors have addressed most comments. They still haven't presented the correct global p-value for the categorical variable included in the Cox model.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

The authors have still not addressed the previous reviewer comment regarding the global p-value for BP level. Any model that presents a categorical variable, should present a p-value for the covariate as a whole. I'm not sure why you have removed the estimates and p-values for each BP level from Model 1, that was not what I was asking. The authors should present an overall p-value for BP level in addition to the p-values presented for each BP level. If you are using SPSS for your analysis, there were will be a sig. value for BP level just above the output for the 'elevated' category (it should have a df=3). This is the global p-value that tests the covariate as a whole. 
Response: Thanks for your critical comments. First of all, thank you very much for your patient guidance and I am sorry that I failed to understand your meaning in the previous revision. In this revision, we added the correct global p-value for the BP categorical variable included in the Cox model. Detail as follows: Table 2 presents the multivariate Cox regression analyses for the risk of stroke in incidence relation to different BP levels (the specific global p-value is 0.011). In addition, similar results were found after excluding participants on antihypertensive treatments (n=3118) (the specific global p-value is 0.047) (Table 3). In addition, we have added the specific global p-value in corresponding tables.

I am expected to receive detailed suggestions if the response might not satisfy you.

Thank you very much.

Yours,

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Liqiang Zheng, MD, PhD