Reviewer’s report

Title: Causes of death in hospitalized children younger than 12 years of age in a Chinese hospital: A 10 year study

Version: 0 Date: 12 May 2017

Reviewer: Abraham Flaxman

Reviewer's report:

This paper reports on the immediate and underlying cause of death from a large hospital in China. It provides useful information about the burden of disease, but needs additional information on methods to be as useful as possible.

Page 5, lines 1-14: I would like a lot more detail about how the direct cause and underlying cause were identified.

1. Does your hospital use a death certificate based on the WHO form?
2. Did you use any tool, such as ACME or IRIS to code the death certificate entries?
3. How did you map from ICD-10 codes to the categories in this paper? (I suggest a table showing the mapping as supplementary materials)
4. How did you select the broad categories for direct cause and chronic underlying cause?
5. Could you also report on non-chronic underlying causes, such as pneumonia (as underlying cause)?
6. Why did you exclude injuries?
7. Please describe your process of identifying chronic underlying disease. Is this from something analogous to Part II of the WHO certificate?

Minor comments:

Page 3, line 50-51: "With in-depth investigations, these assessments could renew the sense of commitment to fatal conditions among healthcare staff." Interesting observation! Say more about this.

Page 4, line 54: why were deaths in the emergency department excluded?
Page 7, line 58: perhaps surprising that there is so little diarrheal death. is this an artifact of who ends up in this hospital? Or perhaps a testament to the quality of care that diarrhea cases receive?

Page 11, line 27: (and earlier): what is meant by "accident" in this context?

Page 12, line 19: I strongly suggest that an anonymized dataset be made available for the purposes of future replications.

Figure 1: this is interesting, and should be described in more detail in the methods section.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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