Reviewer’s report

Title: Lifestyle, chronic diseases and self-rated health among Malaysian adults: The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS), 2011

Version: 2 Date: 19 May 2015

Reviewer: Kathryn Hoffmann

Reviewer’s report:

An interesting and comprehensive manuscript about lifestyle, chronic diseases and self-rated health among Malaysian adults, thereby filling the gap of existing knowledge about self-rated health among the general population in Malaysia. However, the submitted paper needs revision before publication.

Minor revisions:

1. Background: the authors did not explain that also the social determinants of health like infrastructure, housing, political situation, availability of clean water, availability and affordability of healthy food etc. have a strong association with SRH. Please, add this.

2. Methods: Study design: Who performed the face-to-face interviews? What was their education/profession?

3. Discussion: page 8, line 10: Why did you choose a p-value of 0.25 to retain variables? Please explain. And did you check if the variables retained were possible confounder for the others? Maybe it would be a good idea to move lines 20-23 page 9 to this particular method section.

4. Results: page 9, lines 23 - end of result section: it is not necessary to repeat numbers and value stated already in the tables in the text.

5. Discussion: page 11, lines 9-11: is there a reference to proof that the traditional perception of Malaysians is that being heavier is healthier?

6. Discussion: page 13, lines 16ff: Also persons with hypertension or hyperlipidaemia can live a totally normal life if they receive proper medical care. Why do you highlight diabetes? Moreover, persons with diabetes mainly have at the same time hypertension and hyperlipidaemia; maybe this could be another reason for the non-significance.

7. Discussion: Limitations: Why do you think that your data are representative? Is there a national statistics reference (e.g. regarding sex, age, ..) that proofs you assumptions?

8. Discussion: Limitations: another limitation could be the social desirability of certain answer categories in front of the interviewer.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.