Reviewer’s report

Title: Evaluating changes in electronic gambling machine policy on user losses in an Australian jurisdiction

Version: 1 Date: 12 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Houra Haghpanahan

Reviewer's report:

1. There is the sentence in abstract saying "This study evaluates 'the effect' of EGM… and to 'estimate' changes in user losses per adult… ". I would suggest replacing the words 'effect' and 'estimate' as the study has provided descriptive statistics for their measurements. They have simply calculated an association between these measurements over time and have not estimated any causal effect or parameters.

2. Page 7 line 20: "…EGMs in community… is the 'most significant policy' change…". I would suggest not to make this statement in the introduction because you are trying to evaluate these policies and answer the question.

3. Regarding my comment (number 2) in the previous review, I think as the journal has an international reputation and are available to a wide, global audience. It would be appropriate to highlight the importance of the topic, globally. As it is previously mentioned gambling is recently categorised as a public health issue and will get more attention in the near future. I leave this as a discretionary amendment.

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

Yes

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

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal