Author’s response to reviews

Title: Exploring the burden of fatal drowning and data characteristics in three high income countries: Australia, Canada and New Zealand

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Megan Barling

BMC Public Health

Thank you to the editorial office and reviewers for their efforts in providing comment on PUBH-D-18-04638R1 our manuscript entitled “Exploring the burden of fatal drowning and data characteristics in three high income countries: Australia, Canada and New Zealand”, which we submitted for potential publication in BMC Public Health.

We are pleased to see there is support for the study to be published after essential minor revisions. We have addressed the editor’s comments, point by point, below and have also revised the manuscript accordingly, without using track changes.

We hope that the revisions are to the editor’s satisfaction and the paper is now suitable for publication.

We can confirm that all authors have agreed to the submission to the journal and that the manuscript is not currently under submission in any other journal.

It would be an honour to be published in BMC Public Health.

Kind regards,

Amy Peden
EDITOR'S COMMENT: Ethics approval. Please provide the full names of all the local ethics committees that provided ethical approval of the study. Currently there is ethics approval provided only by Australian ethics committees.

AUTHOR RESPONSE: Thank you this comment. We have added additional content into the ‘Ethics approval and consent to participate’ section of the manuscript. This additional content discusses both Canadian and New Zealand procedures with respect to data acquisition and analysis and also clarifies that the James Cook University ethics (approval number H7399) covers all three country’s data in the project – with the Victorian Department of Justice ethics approvals (CF/07/13729; CF/10/25057; CF/13/19798) covering ethics approval for accessing Australian data.

The revised ethics approval and consent to participate section now reads as follows:

“Australia drowning data ethics is provided by the Victorian Department of Justice Human Research Ethic Committee (JHREC) (CF/07/13729; CF/10/25057; CF/13/19798). The Drowning Prevention Research Centre Canada has individual research agreements in place with the provincial and territorial coroner’s and medical examiner’s offices. Water Safety New Zealand has agreements with Coronal Services New Zealand, the National Coronal Information System (Australia) (NZ008) and the New Zealand Ministry of Health (2007-0825) to access data in order to maintain DrownBase. The protocols of DrownBase access adhere to the principles of the New Zealand Privacy Act 1993. Ethics board approval for this comparative, multi-country study (covering data from Australia, Canada and New Zealand) was provided by James Cook University Human Research Ethics Committee (H7399). Consent to participate was not gained as data is aggregated and reflects people who are deceased. “

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Clean manuscript. At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.

AUTHOR RESPONSE: Thank you for this comment, we have uploaded our revised manuscript, which includes the information on the ethics approvals, in a clean version without track changes.