Reviewer’s report

Title: Epidemiology of multimorbidity and implications for healthcare: Cross-sectional survey among 162,464 community household residents in southern China

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Reviewer: Alexandra prados-Torres

Reviewer’s report:

The innovativeness of this article is mainly due to the population studied, China, where epidemiology of multimorbidity is not described yet.
The paper is well written and methodologically correct.

However, I strongly suggest the authors consider the following:

Minor revisions:

1) Methods. The authors mention that the study used self-report data from a large cross-sectional community household health survey. Those items from the National Health Services Survey (NHSS) 2008 included and analysed of this study should be clearly stated and provided as an annex, to ensure replicability. In fact it should be clarified if the information is directly gathered from the original questionnaire, or an “ad hoc” survey was conducted for this study.

2) Methods. The authors explain that “the selection of included morbidities was based on the methodology adopted in a previous UK study [3] and another systematic review [28] in which morbidities recommended as a core for international multimorbidity studies were listed. To take into consideration China’s healthcare context, major morbidities captured in the National Health Services Survey in China [25] were also included”. It is suggested that, in order to increase comparability among studies, Table S1 shows clearly those coincident/non coincident chronic conditions included in the multimorbidity count.

Discretionary revisions:

3) Discussion. The authors say in the section about comparison with other studies that: “This is the first large scale study to examine the epidemiological pattern of multimorbidity…”. The term “pattern of multimorbidity” is commonly used among the scientific community to describe a specific aspect of multimorbidity, the presence of systematic associations among diseases. If this aspect of multimorbidity is not going to be addressed in the study, we recommend avoiding it the term this paper.

4) Discussion. In the limitations section, the authors mention that “health care use is only measured by usual source of healthcare.”, but no further discussion is made about the potential misclassification of individuals, neither about its impacts
on the occurrence of multimorbidity. Further development and clarification regarding the findings related to this variable would be appreciated. Moreover, this limitation of the study should make the authors be very cautious when interpreting the results, especially if, as stated in the paper, “the primary care-orientated healthcare reform is ongoing in China”.

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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