Reviewer's report

Title: Verifying causes of death in Thailand: rationale & methods for empirical investigation

Version: 1 Date: 5 February 2010

Reviewer: Peter Byass

Reviewer's report:

As I understand it you have asked me for an “overview” review of this set of 4 papers, so I will not be commenting in great detail on each one.

Overall, my impression is of a solid body of work, well executed. It may not be startlingly new or exciting, but it provides an important perspective on mortality in a transitional country. If they are going to be published as a group then it will be very important for the accompanying comment (which you suggested I might write) to perhaps go a little beyond comment, towards synthesis, as it is rather hard at present to work out how the four papers fit together. In fact I am still struggling slightly to see what is the logical order in which the papers should be presented.

As individual papers, they each present important and distinctive findings. I would rate all four papers more or less equivalently in terms of their publishability.

Thus my overall conclusion is that, subject to the views of reviewers on the individual papers, this is a set of papers that could usefully be published together in PHM, provided that they are accompanied by a synthesising comment to help readers find their way around them.

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.