

Author's response to reviews

Title: Temporal analysis of the incidence of meningitis in the Tehran metropolitan area, 1999-2005.

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Version: 3 **Date:** 25 October 2009

Author's response to reviews: see over

Author's response to editor's comments:

Reviewer comment:

1) Please indicate when the Army began to vaccinate recruits.

Author's response:

The editor's request was met. The approximate date of vaccinate was stated.

Reviewer comment:

2) On Page 4-5, you state: "Cases are mainly defined based on clinical and laboratory data according to public health authorities' recommendations." Please define those recommendations.

Author's response:

The editor's request was met. Under subheading of **Subjects and case definitions** the cases definition was added and a details of each definition was brought as exhibition number 1

Reviewer comment:

3) On Page 5, you state: "For the purpose of this study, the file of each reported case (a case that satisfies criteria for being reported to the DHS)..." Please define those criteria.

Author's response:

The editor's request was met. Under subheading of **Subjects and case definitions** the cases definition was added and a details of

Reviewer comment:

4) On Page 5, you state: "The study population consisted of the residents of the Tehran..." Please indicate how residency is defined.

Author's response:

The editor's request was met. A sentence defining Tehran residencu was added to the end of paragraph 2 page 5.

Reviewer comment:

5) On Page 5, you state: "The population of Tehran was 6,758,840, based on the 1995 census report..." Please provide population for the rest of the years from 1996 to 2005.

Author's response: The editor's request was met. The population figures were added to the text in paragraph 3 of page 5.

Reviewer comment:

6) On Table 2: Please provide a clearer title to describe this table.

Author's response:

The editor's request was met. The title of the table was changed

Reviewer comment:

7) Figure 2 is unnecessary; please remove.

Author's response:

The editor's request was met. The figure was removed

Reviewer comment:

8) Some patients may die before going to a hospital; the paper does not capture death as incidence. This may be truer for women than men. If men are in the army, they will be referred to medical care and are more likely to be diagnosed. Women may be more likely to die without referral or diagnosis.

Author's response:

The editor's request discusses a fact that may not stand in this population. Based on my own knowledge and a search of scientific literature, no strong documents were found to support that female may be under diagnosed.