Author's response to reviews

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

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Professor Murray,

RE: Submission of revised manuscript No: MS 1834017849315084 – Verifying causes of death in Thailand: rationale and methods for empirical investigation

Thank you for providing an opportunity to submit a revised manuscript for consideration by Population Health Metrics. Our detailed responses to comments from reviewers that require specific attention are as follows.

Reviewer: Mohsen Naghavi

1. My suggestion is that you should present a table with two or three column “before and after verification with VA and medical record review at least for twenty or fifty top causes in ICD10 3 digit format” (not tabulation) for your result, as this is the most important part of study.

Response: We have added a table to the Annex tables submitted along with paper 4 of the series; in which we have listed the age, sex, and detailed ICD10 code (3 or 4 character) for each of the 11984 cases included in the study; from each of the data sources as available; ie from the vital registration (VR); medical record review (MR), and verbal autopsy (VA). Interested readers could access this table, and aggregate or analyze the data according to their specific research interests.

Reviewer: Peter Byass

Comment from reviewer (covering all four manuscripts):

Manuscript title: Estimated causes of death in Thailand, 2005: implications for health policy

Comment 1:: The abstract mentions 12,000 deaths which should be 11,984 to be consistent with other papers.

Response: We have amended the number in the abstract to 11,984 deaths

Comment 2: First paragraph of Methods: “registration data” is rather imprecisely introduced, meaning the vital registration database which is crucial to this work, and which may not be clear to someone reading only this paper.

Response: As suggested, we have replaced ‘registration data’ with the phrase ‘data from the national vital registration database’.

Comments 3 & 4: Typographical errors in Tables 5 and 6.

Response: We have corrected these errors.
Manuscript title: Cause of death ascertainment for deaths that occur outside hospitals in Thailand: application of verbal autopsy methods

Comment 1: Table 6: “HIV” should be “HIV/AIDS” as elsewhere; also inconsistencies between table 6 and 7 over ‘TB’ and “respiratory tuberculosis”.

Response: We have amended Table 6 as advised. Also, we have listed the cause of death as ‘tuberculosis’ in both tables 6 and 7.

Manuscript title: Cause-specific mortality patterns among hospital deaths in Thailand

Comment: I suggest that the title would benefit from a second part, reflecting the style of the other 3 titles and also giving a clearer message about the paper. My suggestion would be ‘...validating routine death certification’ although of course the authors may have other ideas.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion, and have added the suggested text to the title as a second part.

As instructed by the PHM Editorial Team, we are submitting a revised version of the manuscript via the electronic manuscript processing website. We have formatted the revised manuscript according to PHM guidelines.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of this submission, and in case any further information or clarification regarding the manuscript is required, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

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