

## Peer Review Report

# Review Report on Evolution of Esophageal Cancer Incidence Patterns in Hong Kong: A Three-Decade Analysis with Future Projections

Original Article, Int J Public Health

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

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### EVALUATION

#### **Q 1** Please summarize the main findings of the study.

The study reported a decreasing trend in crude incidence rate of esophageal cancer in Hong Kong in the past three decades, and projected a continuing decreasing trend in the future years. Although population aging was likely to increase the esophageal cancer rate in Hong Kong, the improvement in epidemiological factors offset the age effects.

#### **Q 2** Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

This study is well-written with appropriate statistical methods and result interpretation. However, as mentioned by the authors, data on other risk factors would help understand the drivers for the decreasing trend in Hong Kong.

#### **Q 3** Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

In this study, the authors examined the change in esophageal cancer incidence in Hong Kong from 1992 to 2021, using the Hong Kong Cancer Registry data. The methods applied, data interpretation, and literature cited are appropriate; however, they could benefit from minor revisions for enhanced clarity.

#### Introduction

1. Line 59–60: please clarify the trends documented in previous literature, e.g., the direction, temporal year, country/regions, etc.

#### Methods:

1. How were the cases recorded in the cancer register? What are the sources? Is the population coverage maintained at the same level from 1992 to 2021?

2. Please clarify “population growth”.

3. Please be more specific about how age-specific incidence rate in the decomposition analysis was measured?

#### Results:

1. Line 143: Is there any statistical evidence of the decrease in incidence? Please refer to “significant” only for statistical comparisons (e.g.,  $p < 0.05$ ) to avoid confusion.

2. Line 169–171: The IRR increases at the very beginning in Figure 3C, which doesn’t align with the statement “a monotonically decreasing trend”.

#### PLEASE COMMENT

**Q 4** Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Yes

**Q 5** Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes

**Q 6** Is the English language of sufficient quality?

Yes

**Q 7** Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

**Q 8** Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?)

Yes

#### QUALITY ASSESSMENT

**Q 9** Originality



**Q 10** Rigor



**Q 11** Significance to the field



**Q 12** Interest to a general audience



**Q 13** Quality of the writing



**Q 14** Overall scientific quality of the study



#### REVISION LEVEL

**Q 15** Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Minor revisions.