Hypertension Control Prevalence Estimates Should Account for Age

Hao Peng¹ and Yonghong Zhang¹

To the Editor: This letter refers to “Prevalence, Awareness, Treatment, and Control of Hypertension in China: Results From a National Survey” by Wang *et al.* Hypertension is highly prevalent worldwide and the leading preventable cause of cardiovascular disease (CVD).¹ Control of hypertension is very important in preventing incident CVD. In recent decades, the Chinese government and primary care physicians have made a great effort to improve hypertension management. What is the condition of hypertension control after a decade of these efforts? Unfortunately, few data are available that provide an accurate estimate of the hypertension control rate in China. Wang and colleagues² provided the answer. Using a nationally representative sample of Chinese adults, they reported a hypertension

control rate of 27.4% among hypertensive patients receiving treatment.² This rate was much lower than the worldwide average rate of 32.5%,³ indicating that hypertension was still poorly controlled in China.

In their study, Wang *et al.* defined control of hypertension as systolic blood pressure (SBP) <140/90 mm Hg regardless of the age of hypertensive individuals.^{2,3} However, the 2014 evidence-based guidelines for the management of high blood pressure in adults from the Eighth Joint National Committee⁴ recommend reducing SBP to <150 mm Hg not <140 mm Hg in hypertensive patients aged >60 years. Namely, hypertensive individuals aged >60 years with a SBP <150 mm Hg who are receiving treatment should be considered as having well-controlled hypertension. Wang *et al.* underestimated the hypertension control rate in hypertensive patients aged >60 years by,² which was estimated as 27.2%. It might be more reasonable to report the control rate in hypertensive patients aged >60 years using <150/90 mm Hg as the definition instead of <140/90 mm Hg.

The hypertension control rate is very important for policy makers. Excess health resources would be used in hypertension management if the hypertension control rate was too low. In fact, according to the Eighth Joint National

Committee, the hypertension control rate would be higher in China.

DISCLOSURE

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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Correspondence: Yonghong Zhang (yhzhang@suda.edu.cn).

¹Department of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, Medical College of Soochow University, Suzhou, China.

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