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Houston; May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**In response to the reviewers:**

Dear Editor

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format “Malaty-GC-Revised.doc.

**Title:** The Geographical Distribution of the Incidence of Gastric Cancer in Bhutan.

**Authors:** Tashi Dendup, James M Richter, Yoshio Yamaoka, Kinley Wangchuk, Hoda M. Malaty.

**Name of Journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 17748

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1 Format has been updated

2 Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewer

**1) is there a possibility that the reason for the incidence is genetic and not environmental (H Pylori) related?**

**Answer:** We added a paragraph in the discussion section and highlighted it “It was also reported that host genetic have an impact on host responses to gastric inflammation and acid secretion thereby interacting with *H. pylori* infection in gastric carcinogenesis (22). Therefore, host genetic factors may determine why some individuals infected with *H. pylori* develop gastric cancer, while others do not (22).

- 2) **you mention it a bit but you should expand on the reason for higher H pylori in some areas**

**Answer:** We added a paragraph in the discussion section and highlighted it “Moreover, various biological strains could be present in different parts of the country and within individuals. A study published that Indian *H. pylori* isolates have been shown to have European origins and are widely held to be only mildly pathogenic (21).

- 3) **why is the mortality so low , if patients presented at such advanced stage? are the records regarding mortality accurate? This is extremely important.**

**Answer:** Yes, the records are correct. Unfortunately at this phase of our current study, we don't have further data to discuss the mortality rate in Bhutan as our focus was on the estimate of GC in Bhutan. We added few sentences in the limitation of the study regarding the mortality rate with emphasis on future studies regarding that topic.

3 References and typesetting were corrected

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely yours,

Hoda M. Malaty