

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Terminology in “Rural Community Knowledge of Stroke Warning Signs and Risk Factors”

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To the Editor:

While I appreciate the effort of Blades et al in conducting the valuable research for “Rural Community Knowledge of Stroke Warning Signs and Risk Factors” (1), I believe that respondents to the survey do not necessarily represent rural communities. The authors cite county population densities as justification for using this classification; however, Cascade and Yellowstone counties contain two of the largest cities in the state of Montana. Statistically, the survey would have had to include a disproportionately large number of respondents who live either in the city’s limits or its nearby suburbs. In addition, the authors did not note this as a limitation of the study. A survey using zip codes for small towns (less than 5000 inhabitants) more than 30 miles from a tertiary health care facility would be a more appropriate methodology in determining a true rural community.

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References

1. Blades LL, Oser CS, Dietrich DW, Okon NJ, Rodriguez DV, Burnett AM, et al. Rural community knowledge of stroke warning signs and risk factors. *Prev Chronic Dis* [serial online] 2005 Apr [cited 2005 Apr 1].