Reviewer's report

Title: Influenza and Pneumococcal vaccine uptake among nursing home residents in Nottingham: a postal questionnaire survey

Version: 1 Date: 2 November 2007

Reviewer: Mary Patricia Nowalk

Reviewer's report:

General

Although I am not familiar with the UK literature on adult immunizations in nursing homes, I believe there is a good base of data on this topic from the US. Therefore, I believe that the primary way in which this paper could be improved is by putting it into context. The paper should state up front that it was conducted in the UK. Other examples: What are the national recommendations for vaccination of older adults in the UK? What are the national or local regulations with regard to immunizations for residents of nursing homes? What is the consent process? Are vaccinees required to give oral or written consent before receiving a vaccine? Who else can give consent?

Additionally, how does the geographic location of the homes in the study compare with the rest of the country? Is it different? Is it representative? Tell me about the nursing homes. How large are they? Are they private or publicly owned? Did the vaccination responsibility differ based on their size or some other factor? Urban, rural? Level of care? Short term or long term stays? Who sets the vaccination policy?

Secondly, the manuscript does not seem to have been written with care, as there are many typographical, spelling and grammatical mistakes.

Thirdly, there are statements made that should be supported by citations, for example, Discussion paragraph 2, last sentence. There are also data supporting vaccination of staff as an effective way to protect long term care residents from influenza outbreaks that should be discussed.


Finally, the table could easily be eliminated and put into text.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision
on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have received funding for investigator initiated studies from Merck & Co Inc. a manufacturer of vaccines.