Reviewer's report


Version: 1 Date: 10 March 2009

Reviewer: Eelko Hak

Reviewer's report:

The subject is timely and of importance. From a public health perspective data are helpful to predict future behaviour with regard to measures in case of a pandemic.

Major compulsory revision: large parts of the introduction need to be moved to the discussion section for reasons of readability.

Minor:
1. Why did panel members receive a small fee? And how may this have influenced the results?
2. How representative is your panel? It might be helpful to have distributions of the main demographical data for the Netherlands population.
3. Most attention in this questionnaire survey has been given to the concepts of risks in terms of probability and severity. While these elements are undoubtedly key variables in taking measures, it might be worthwhile to discuss other potential behavioural elements as well as organizational and ethical issues involved in the prediction of taking of preventive measures and study thereof in the future.
4. Many references are made to books. Is it possible to give peer-reviewed publications which can be retrieved by the readers?
5. Table 1.: please add figures for the Netherlands as a whole
6. Table 2: any statistic involved here? It might be interesting to estimate the significance of difference in means? (E.g. common cold and AI have statistically significant mean severity and vulnerability scores.
7. Table 3. A figure might be more readable.
8. Table 4. Please add what high and low score mean.
9. Table 5. You may wish to present the discriminative value of the model (AUC and 95% CI). This may be helpful in the discussion whether these are really the elements, or that other elements may also be important.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests