Reviewer's report

Title: Incidence and effects of Varicella Zoster Virus Infection on academic activities of medical undergraduates - a Five Year Follow-Up Study from Sri Lanka

Version: 1 Date: 17 October 2009

Reviewer: Parvapan Bhattarakosol

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. How reliable of the study by using the information from self-administered structured questionnaire? Did the questionnaire have been validated before use?
2. The authors show the effect of VZV infection on academic activities lost in Table 2 and elaborate details in text (Result section) by using mean without standard deviation. How much do the variations of those information have? The mean number might be higher than it should be due to some of them had severe symptoms. Mean may not be a good representation. How is about Mode or Median?
3. Need clarification about the number of total person years of exposure (8,663) and the incidence desity per 1000 persons years of follow-up
4. Please recheck the number of susceptible follow-up (157 or 153) as well as the proportion lost (8.7%). The number does not correlate to the figure 1.

Minor essential revision:
1. Figure 2: missing labels (Y axis)
2. recheck English (grammar, tense, etc)

Discretionary revisions:
Table 1 can be deleted. No need to repeat presentation both in Table and text.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.