Reviewer's report

Title: Anxiety, knowledge and attitudes toward influenza A/H1N1 vaccination in healthcare workers in Gaziantep: a city in south-eastern Turkey

Version: 2 Date: 11 May 2010

Reviewer: Jonathan A McCullers

Reviewer's report:

The authors of MS, “Anxiety, knowledge and attitudes toward influenza A/H1N1 vaccination in healthcare workers in Gaziantep: a city in south-eastern Turkey,” present data from a survey of healthcare workers administered at 2 hospitals in Turkey regarding knowledge, attitudes, and uptake of influenza vaccination during the 2009-2010 H1N1 influenza pandemic season. The essential findings are that uptake was very low, and vaccine refusal was related to the belief that the vaccine does not work and has side effects. In addition, failure of government officials to support vaccination had a negative impact on HCWs attitudes. Many countries in Europe had similar difficulties getting HCWs and the populace as a whole vaccinated this past season. In many countries including Spain, Greece, Italy, and Turkey, it has been suggested that widespread negative media reports and lack of support form key government officials contributed. It is important to see quantification of these effects in the literature to help drive public policy. Thus, the core data and message of this paper is interesting. However, it requires shortening and extensive editing for English language and for conciseness. In addition, I do not believe that the data on “anxiety” are useful in this analysis, and some of the conclusions drawn from the anxiety data as presented are unjustified and detract from the overall message.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) The manuscript requires editing by an English language editor. It should be shortened. In particular, the following sections / sentences can be deleted entirely:
   - p.2, second paragraph, beginning Influenza A/H1N1
   - p. 12, last 3 paragraphs of discussion immediately before the conclusions
   - Table 1 can be deleted and referred to in the text, or the totals can be incorporated into a revised Table 2
   - Table 2 should be revised so that the data are presented as 1 column for each group, Correct/Total (%) instead of 4 columns per group.

2) Table 5, the accompanying methods, results, and discussion should either be deleted entirely or significantly shortened and de-emphasized in the text

3) The authors should relate their findings to those of other in their region that are already published, particularly the Greek experience where media also played a
role in negative stereotyping of the vaccine (Rachiotis G et al., Euro Surveill, 2010;15(6) and Mammas I et al., Acta Pediatr 2010;Feb 26). The point that lack of support from government officials negatively impacted beliefs should be emphasized as this is a differentiating point from previously published studies of HCW attitudes towards vaccine.

Minor Essential Revisions

4) “Influenza A agent virus” should be “influenza A virus” throughout; please delete “agent”

5) p.3, line 14 – delete “countless”

6) p. 11, 2nd paragraph – the conclusions on anxiety levels in women relating to attitudes about the vaccine are overstated and should be deleted

7) Results and Tables 2 and 4 – low P-values should be presented as $p < 0.001$, not $p = 0.000$

8) Table 2, Is swine flu a serious outbreak – 86.8% not 6.8%

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests