Reviewer's report

Title: Planning for the next influenza H1N1 season: a modelling study

Version: 3 Date: 20 August 2010

Reviewer: Junling Ma

Reviewer's report:

The authors have address most of my concerns in my previous report satisfactorily. On the other hand, I would like to see the following further enhancements:

1. The authors should make a plot of the curve of the hospitalized cases that they used, so that the dataset can be compared with other datasets, for example, the one used in [1].

2. They should mention the starting date of their data used in simulations, and whether they address the seemingly two peaks in their dataset (in the figure 2, also in [1]).

3. I am still not convinced that the R0 computed from this dataset is so small. Using the dataset presented in [1] a quick and rough estimate yields an exponential growth rate of 0.35-0.39/week, using the period from week #38 to #43 or 44. This translates to R0=1.3-1.4 using the serial interval the author employed in their simulations (see [2] for the method). To justify this, the authors should make a plot to compare the curve of the hospitalized cases for 2009 pandemic, and that for the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 seasons. The R0 provided by the authors, 1.3 for average nonpandemic seasons and 1.18 for the pandemic season, imply that the epidemic final size in 2009 pandemic is smaller than a typical nonpandemic season.

4. When fitting the exponential growth rate, it seems that the full epidemic curve in figure 2, which contains two peaks, is used. The start of the exponential growth rate should start from the trough after the first peak.


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