Author's response to reviews

Title: Fever screening during the influenza (H1N1-2009) pandemic at Narita International Airport, Japan

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. McVernon,

We would like to submit our revised manuscript entitled “Fever screening during the influenza (H1N1-2009) pandemic at Narita International Airport, Japan” by Hiroshi Nishiura and Kazuko Kamiya for consideration for publication as an Original Article in *BMC Infectious Diseases*.

Minor revisions were made in accordance with the editors’ suggestions. This letter is followed by our point-by-point responses below. We have highlighted the revised text in red in the manuscript.

All the authors have approved the revised manuscript and declare that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. We hope that the revised manuscript is now suitable for publication in *BMC Infectious Diseases*.

Yours sincerely,

Hiroshi Nishiura

-----RESPONSES TO THE EDITORS-----

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[RESPONSES TO Associate Editor]

The authors have satisfactorily addressed the substantive comments of reviewers. Prior to acceptance of this manuscript for publication I would ask, however, that they reconsider the phrasing of several statements through the text that refer to this work’s
evaluation of the ‘feasibility of fever screening in detecting and diagnosing influenza’. This manuscript does not evaluate the feasibility of the screening measure per se, which clearly was able to be conducted on large numbers of airline passengers. Rather, the emphasis should be shifted to reflect the paper’s real question, which is ‘the feasibility of detecting influenza cases, based on fever screening as a sole measure’ or something along those lines.

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We thank the editor for this comment, because rewriting the corresponding phrases can help avoid any unnecessary confusion among policymakers. Accordingly, all the relevant sentences with the mention of feasibility were rewritten (Page 2, Lines 5-6, Page 6, Lines 3-4 and Page 22, Line 2-3). Moreover, relevant sentences were also modified accordingly (Page 18, Line 3 and Page 19, Lines 1-2).

[RESPONSES TO Section Editor]
I would suggest the authors to modify page 19, lines 23 the part of the sentence "leading to small estimates of both the sensitivity and specificity" which is flawed. The selection of suspected patients would increase sensitivity (by increasing the number of true positive patients) compared with a sensitivity that could be obtained on all arriving passengers. "leading to small specificity but high sensitivity estimates compared..." is correct.

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We agree that the previous mention of sensitivity was incorrect. We believe that the mention should be limited to specificity, and “the sensitivity” was excluded from the corresponding sentence (Page 20 Lines 2-3).

[RESPONSES TO Editorial Email]
In addition, we would be grateful if you could confirm that the data analysed in your study was analysed anonymously and include a statement to this effect in the methods section of the manuscript.

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We added the corresponding sentence to Ethical Considerations (P11, Lines 20-21).

We thank the editors for these comments and for publishing our study in BMC Infectious Diseases.