Reviewer's report

**Title:** Epidemiological and clinical characteristics of childhood pandemic 2009 H1N1 virus infection: An observational study

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 3 June 2011

**Reviewer:** Marco Confalonieri

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This is a large observational study on patients with H1N1 virus infection. The collected data are of interest either from a epidemiological and clinical point of view.

The Authors pointed out adjunctive corticosteroid therapy as very effective, but the lack of a control group should tune down any conclusion about this treatment. Moreover, the rationale of corticosteroid treatment is mainly based on very recent personal theory. I suggest to cite at least two more reports from the literature and include them in the discussion and references (e.g. Annane D., et al. JAMA. 2009 Jun 10;301(22):2362-75. and Confalonieri M., et al. Am J Respir Crit Care Med 2005 Feb 1;171(3):242-8).

**Other comments:**
- the Authors state the diagnosi was performed by virus RT-PCR but, they failed to specify on which sample (pharyngeal?)
- the hospitalization rate was quite low, did the study population followed up? Some of the patients was hospitalized later?
- data about the most severely ill patients should be provided in a separate table. They should include also CRP levels and therapeutics. This could be more useful than reproduction of representative Chest X-rays.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'