Reviewer's report

Title: Statistical estimates of absenteeism attributable to seasonal and pandemic influenza from the Canadian Labour Force Survey

Version: 1 Date: 16 November 2010

Reviewer: Richard Pitman

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
None

Minor Essential Revisions

Background:

Line 5
It is erroneous to claim that absenteeism is the main economic driver. This depends on the adopted perspective, however, hospitalisations in the elderly is also a very significant driver in economic analyses.

Line 12
Remove the word "Our" and replace with "The Canadian".

Methods:

Data Sources second paragraph line 1
Insert "of" after "The weekly number".

Statistical Analysis second paragraph
The model used for absenteeism should be clearly defined.

Results:

Annual Estimates line 8
"lost" should read "loss"

Discussion:

Second paragraph line 22
Please delete the sentence starting "In a separate analysis...". The discussion is not the place to introduce new results, especially when full results and the associated methods are not described.

Figure 2:
None of the traces refer specifically to influenza B. The sentence starting "The
level of influenza B...” is confusing and should be removed (the point is already covered in the text).

Figure 4a:
Change legend to "Influenza-attributed hours lost" and change ordering to be consistent with 4b.

Discretionary Revisions
In figure captions, try to avoid starting with "In this figure".

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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