Author's response to reviews

Title: Respiratory virus surveillance in hospitalised pneumonia patients on the Thailand-Myanmar border

Authors:

Paul Turner (pault@tropmedres.ac)
Claudia Turner (claudia@tropmedres.ac)
Wanitda Watthanaworawit (wanitda@tropmedres.ac)
Verena Carrara (verena@shoklo-unit.com)
Naw Cicelia (turner.drpaul@gmail.com)
Carole Deglise (cdeglise@pu-ami.org)
Christina Phares (ctp7@cdc.gov)
Luis Ortega (LuisO@th.cdc.gove)
Francois Nosten (francois@tropmedres.ac)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
27th January 2013

The editorial team, BMC Infectious Diseases

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Submission of Research Article “Respiratory virus surveillance in hospitalised pneumonia patients on the Thailand-Myanmar border”

Thank you for your email of 26th January outlining some formatting issues with the above manuscript. I can confirm that these issues have been addressed in the revised manuscript. Details of changes/responses are outlined below.

**Requesting ethics statement:** the manuscript describes the results from a disease surveillance system and not a research study as such. The US-CDC Human Studies Oversight and Review Team prospectively reviewed the surveillance protocol and determined that it represented a non-research activity as defined by US 45 CFR 46.102(d). Following US-CDC protocol, this determination negated the requirement for full ethics committee review. Internal CDC review prior to submission of the manuscript requested the wording used in the ethic sub-section of the methods section: “This surveillance program underwent ethical and regulatory review at CDC, and was determined not to meet the definition of research.”

**Requesting consent statement:** following discussion with the US-CDC Human Studies Oversight and Review Team, it was determined that it would be appropriate to obtain verbal consent from surveillance participants (or their parent/guardian if a child). The ethics sub-section of the methods section (page 7) has been amended to clarify this: “Verbal consent was obtained from each potential participant, or their parent/legal guardian in the case of children aged <15 years, prior to enrolment in the surveillance programme.”
**Competing interests:** we have added a competing interests section following the conclusion (page 14). The authors have no competing interests to declare.

We trust that the manuscript is now acceptable for peer review and look forward to your further comments in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Paul Turner, on behalf of the authors