Reviewer’s report

Title: Hospitalization for diseases attributable to human papillomavirus in the Veneto Region (North-East Italy)

Version: 4 Date: 30 July 2013

Reviewer: Giovanni Gabutti

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have estimated the burden of hospitalization for HPV related disease, stratified by sex, in a wide population.

The manuscript is interesting and sufficiently clear; the quality of written English has been improved.

I have assessed the work, considering the following points:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   YES
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   YES
3. Are the data sound?
   YES
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   YES
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   YES
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   YES
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   YES
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
   YES
9. Is the writing acceptable?
   YES

Besides the authors have answered my previous points sufficiently well to allow
their manuscript to be published.

Discretionary revisions

As already written in my previous report, an ample debate on male vaccination is ongoing. There is an ample consensus on the fact that the implementation of male vaccination should be related to the achievement of a high VC% in females. Even if in Veneto CV% is higher than the Italian average, the opportunity to extend immunization to males should be considered with caution. Nowadays, it seems more appropriate to try to achieve higher CV% in females before extending immunization to males. This also in the view of the best use of economic limited resources. As a matter of fact, male immunization would imply a relevant economic burden and, at the moment, at national level HPV vaccination is not performing so well in females.

Besides, the Italian Immunization Plan specifically refers to female vaccination, being cervical cancer the target of this immunization.

For these reason, I would suggest, if possible to comment more in depth this part and to re-write the second sentence in the last page of discussion without a specific mention to quadrivalent vaccine.

I would suggest to change this sentence as follows:

The high proportions of HPV-positive cancers attributable to HPV16/18, and of non-malignant diseases attributable to HPV6/11 underscore the potential importance of preventing the majority of male HPV-related diseases by means of prophylactic vaccination [27].

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 during the last five years I received reimbursements, fees or funding by GSK, Sanofi Pasteur MSD, Novartis, Crucell/Janssen, Pfizer. Besides, I have been or I am involved as PI in clinical trials sponsored by GSK, Novartis, Sanofi Pastuer MSD and I have acted or I am acting as Member of Scientific Boards organized by GSK, Sanofi Pasteur MSD.