Reviewer's report

Title: Significant cross reactivity to influenza virus in adults and children following natural exposure during a period of marked antigenic drift

Version: 2  Date: 14 March 2014

Reviewer: Angel Porgador

Reviewer's report:

In this manuscript the authors investigated the antibody cross reactivity against influenza viruses (H3N2). The investigation was performed over a period of 5 years because during these years a major change in the type of influenza viruses circulating in Israel was detected.

The authors demonstrated that they could detect antibodies that cross-react against two different strains of influenza both in children and in adults. While the cross reactivity that observed in adults is not surprising as they might have been exposed to other influenza virus strains during their life, the cross reactivity observed in children is very surprising as they were never exposed to the virus.

It is an important investigation that demonstrates for the first time the existence of naturally occurring cross-reactive antibodies.

I have only minor comments:

1) The manuscript should be edited by a native English speaker
2) The discussion should be more focused
3) More details should be given in the methods section
4) Can the authors give details about the general immunization regime in the Israeli population

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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'