Reviewer's report

Title: Clinical and epidemiological data of pertussis in fully immunized children in Lithuania

Version: 2 Date: 6 December 2004

Reviewer: Hester E de Melker

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors could improve aim, methods and discussion. Results are not ‘new’ and they have limited added value to current knowledge on pertussis.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Background:
- Mention improved diagnosis and awareness as one of the (possible) reasons for increased incidence among adults
- Too much detail is given and sometimes unclear (35% and 33.4% of vaccinated children fell ill with pertussis; i.e. is this the percentage vaccinated cases among the cases of is still percentage referring to percentage of all vaccinated children that develop pertussis.
- Data on clinical course of pertussis in immunized children is stated to be very controversial. In general the current opinion is that pertussis is relatively mild in vaccinated individuals.

Methods
- Definition of prolonged cough is missing
- Clarify study population, e.g. what do the authors mean with not enough possibilities to investigate them as outpatients?
- Define positivity of serology (cut-off antibody level and paired serology?)
- Means are presented in stead of medians.
- Two-sided t test is mentioned: authors do however not compare groups?

Results
- Authors present only 32 children; why?
- Present median in stead of average because of skewed distribution

Discussion
- To much detail is given (e.g. on percentages etc.)
- Make more evident what is the added value/information of the present paper in current scientific literature

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests.