Reviewer's report

Title: The Epidemiology of Pediatric Aseptic Meningitis in Daejeon, Korea (1987 through 2003)

Version: 4 Date: 8 August 2005

Reviewer: Bruno LINA

Reviewer's report:

General

This second version of the manuscript entitled "The epidemiology of paediatric aseptic meningitis in Daejeon, Korea (1987 through 2003)" submitted by KY Lee et al is much better than the previous one. I must acknowledge that there has been a considerable improvement in the english and in the global organization of the manuscript. The data now available in table 1 support the epidemiological data presented in the manuscript. I still have concerns about the herd immunity that the authors claims to play a role in the age distribution of cases. Enteroviruses are versatile and the occurrence of cases can be the consequences of pre-existing antibodies as well as genetic recombination within given serotypes. Herd immunity alone does not explain why 4-7 year-old patients (and not 2-4 year-old patients) are more likely to be infected by enteroviruses. On the other and, it does explain the low incidence in very young children below 6 months of age.

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

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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)

In the method section, the first sentence of this section must explain that the paediatric population is from 0 to 15-year-old children.

In the result section, yearly incidence sub-section, the first sentence is not clear. I would assume that the number of AM cases would range from the lowest to the largest number of cases recorded. Hence, according to figure 1B, the sentence about range of cases in this period of time should include the number of cases of 1988 (less than 10 cases) and this of 1997 (489 cases).

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

I keep on thinking that too much emphasis is given to herd immunity. If the authors can re-discuss this according to my general comments, I think this would improve the manuscript.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No