Reviewer's report

Title: Pandemic influenza in Australia: perceptions of threat and willingness to comply

Version: 2 Date: 16 May 2008

Reviewer: Raymond A Strikas

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript is a well written and executed study surveying Australian adults about their attitudes regarding their acceptance of possible control measures for pandemic influenza.

Minor discretionary revision:

Table 1 is a nice addition, but the information is handled in the text. The table could be deleted.

I recommend several minor essential revisions:

In the methods, the authors should state what proportion of Australian households have landline telephones, to allow the reader to judge how representative the respondents were, compared to the overall population. If mobile telephones were included in the telephone sample, that inclusion should be described in the methods.

Table 2 is said to demonstrate the study population is comparable to the general Australian population. However, the authors should add p values to document the similarities is necessary. For example, the category "Highest formal qualification" appears to differ significantly between the sample and the general population.

The authors describe findings that over 70% of those responding would receive pandemic influenza vaccine or be isolated if infected, and 59.9% would wear a mask. Their discussion indicates these findings indicate generally high acceptance of these control measures. I believe that the reverse findings of as many as 40% refusing to implement control measures such as wearing a facemask, or nearly 30% possibly declining isolation, should also be discussed. For example, a comparison could be made to the success of quarantine in the SARS outbreak in Toronto, where only 27 persons (0.1%) of those identified requiring quarantine were initially noncompliant and required enforceable quarantine orders (Svoboda T, et al. New Engl J Med 2004;350:2352-61).

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 I have no competing interests.