Reviewer's report

Title: Epidemiological investigations of human rabies in China

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Reviewer: Paata Imnadze

Reviewer’s report:

In order to evaluate the manuscript it is necessary to divide the objectives of study into two parts: Objective 1 - To characterize the current trends of human rabies in China from 1990 to 2007; and Objective 2 - To define better recommendations for improving the post-exposure prophylaxis schedules delivered to rabies patients.

Comments for Objective 1:
(Minor Essential Revisions)

Results of analysis of data obtained from all provincial administrative regions of China for the period 1990-2007 clearly showed increasing trends of human rabies in some China provinces. However, it remains unclear, what kind of mortality rate was calculated during the study and what for, as in cases of human rabies both incidence and mortality rates must be the same. This part should have more detailed explanation or just be excluded from the manuscript as I could not find any figures of mortality rate inside.

Comments for Objective 2:
(Major Compulsory Revisions)

1. Data indicated in part of “analysis of post-exposure treatment failures” are unclear, as if 50 of 80 patients had only washed wounds by themselves and 30 of 80 went to hospitals or local CDCs to have treatment of their wounds, it is not clear who are those 38 of 80 patients who received between one and four shots of rabies vaccine.

2. These data also don’t match figures in Table 1.

3. In my opinion results of study do not fully reflect the objective 2, as in order to define better recommendation for improving the post-exposure prophylaxis schedules delivered to rabies patients it necessary to obtain evidences that cause of human rabies incidence rate increasing was inadequate schedule of PEP. And for this purpose they had to conduct evaluation of reasons of inadequate or insufficient treatment. I could not find any evidence-based explanation of it the manuscript. There are some assumptions, but they are not supported by data. If authors have these kinds of data, it will be better to include it in the manuscript.

As to discussions and conclusions they are well balanced, but might need some corrections if authors would take into account comments described above.
In general, results obtained from the investigation and analyses are important and significant, and should be taken into account during development of plan of activities for improving rabies management in China or other countries with similar situation.

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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"