Reviewer's report

Title: Quarantine for pandemic influenza control at borders in small island nations

Version: 1 Date: 16 September 2008

Reviewer: Hitoshi Oshitani

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript describes the effectiveness of quarantine as a border control measures for an influenza pandemic in a small island nation. Quarantine can be an effective control measure for a pandemic influenza especially for the island nations without porous land borders. This study provides important information to make a plan for quarantine measure. However, there are issues that should be addressed in the manuscript, which include;

1) The authors seem to assume that a rapid test can be equally effective in detecting the symptomatic and the asymptomatic individuals. But asymptomatic individuals are likely to shed lower titer of the virus. Therefore it should be expected that the sensitivity of a rapid test is lower for the asymptomatic individual.

2) The authors do not consider antiviral prophylaxis for those in quarantine, which may add significant value for effectiveness of the quarantine measure.

3) It is practically impossible to separate all individuals in the quarantine facility. For example, the family with small children needs to stay together in a same room. This makes the transmission in the quarantine facility a real issue.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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