Reviewer's report

**Title:** Variations in chemoprophylaxis for meningococcal disease: a retrospective case note review, analysis of routine prescribing data and questionnaire of general practitioners

**Authors:**
Peter J Marks (peter.marks@nottingham.ac.uk)
Keith R Neal (keith.neal@nottingham.ac.uk)

**Version:** 4 **Date:** 5 Oct 2001

**Reviewer:** karen roos

**Level of interest:** not specified

**Advice on publication:** Other (see below)

The authors of this study evaluated general practitioner and hospital doctor prescribing of chemoprophylaxis for contacts of meningococcal disease over a two-year period of time. The authors found that general practitioners prescribed 118% more chemoprophylaxis than was recommended, and that the highest level of prescribing occurred in areas with high rates of disease. The authors also raise the concern that all true close contacts do not receive prophylaxis.

The authors provide a comprehensive review of their methods but do not in the discussion provide recommendations based on their results. Do the authors favor over-prescribing in areas with high rates of disease to avoid missing true close contacts?

The discussion should not begin with a description of the limitations of the study. This leaves the reader with the impression that the data may not be valid.

The authors have done a nice study, but they have not told us anything we did not already know.

**Competing interests:**
None declared.