Author's response to reviews

Title: Compliance with herpes zoster vaccination in young and adult individuals in two regions of Italy

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Author's response to reviews: see over
First reviewer's report:
The aim of the study is not clearly formulated (as well as the methods and results); i.e. in the background it is written in the last sentence that a prevalence study has been conducted. No information is given what kind of information is collected although probably the authors mean that information on knowledge and perception was collected.
Yes, as stated in the introduction, the aim of our study was to explore the knowledge of VZV infections in the general population of two Italian regions, and to analyze its immunization status towards VZV and the acceptance of a potential HZ vaccination.

Furthermore in the method and result section insufficient information is given on what data has been collected and the description of the results are also not clear. For example what does the authors mean with the sentence: In particular, about the knowledge of HZ in respect to the acceptance of the vaccination, 1965 individuals interviewed claimed their availability towards this type of prevention. What does the OR represent.
In our sentence 2,233 individuals knowing the HZ have 1.4 times the probability to accept the vaccination vs who does not.

It seems that the authors intended to compare the acceptance of vaccination between those who had knowledge on the disease (as a result of their personal experience with the disease?) and those who had no knowledge. However, only information seem to be given on the individuals who accept vaccination?
See methods and results sections modifications to clarify this items.

Overall a large part of the paper is very unclear.
We hope that now it could be more clear.

Second reviewer's report:
Major compulsory revisions
- The level of detail provided in the results is very limited (1 result table). This come as a surprise knowing that more than 3000 individuals were interviewed face-to-face. The main result is that individuals are ready to be vaccinated but nothing is said on the perception of the severity of this disease, the conditions in which individual would accept to be vaccinated (financial conditions, convenience, perceived risks,...), the relationship between their perception of the disease and their willingness to be vaccinated,...
We agree with the reviewer and Table 2 has been added; as suggested by the reviewer we also added the Odds Ratio considering the perception of the severity of the disease, the knowledge of the disease and the degree of education as substitute of the financial conditions, in the results section.

- The authors do not discuss how their results compare with other studies on a similar topic for HZ, VZV or any other vaccine-preventable disease.
Similar studies have been reported in the discussion section.

Specific comments:
- Authors should provide results on the representativeness of their sample: comparison with the general population with respect to education level, vaccination status, proportion of subjects having contracted VZV or HZ in the past
We agree with the reviewer but our sample is not representative of the Italian population, the aim of this study must be understood as a study pilot from which we can be able to
understand the compliance toward the vaccine and from this could draw a multicentre study of population.

- For both diseases, the results reported correspond to only 3 general questions (know the disease, having been affected in the past, ready to be vaccinated or already vaccinated). Authors should therefore state more clearly if only these three questions were asked or if they deliberately chose to focus on the main results. The sketch of the study is for understanding the three items that the reviewer has underlined.

- Cross-tabulation between disease knowledge, experience of the disease and willingness to be vaccinated would be welcome as well as cross tabulation on answers for varicella and zoster. The results of the cross tabulation has been added in the results section as Odds Ratio.

- Authors should present, for each subgroup specifically, the proportion knowing the disease, having experienced the disease and immunized or ready to be immunized. These results has been added in table 2.