Author's response to reviews

Title: Influenza vaccination coverage against seasonal and pandemic influenza and their determinants in France: a cross-sectional survey

Authors:

Sophie Vaux (s.vaux@invs.sante.fr)
Dieter Van Cauteren (d.vancauteren@invs.sante.fr)
Jean-Paul Guthmann (jp.guthmann@invs.sante.fr)
Yann Le Strat (y.lestrat@invs.sante.fr)
Véronique Vaillant (v.vaillant@invs.sante.fr)
Henriette de Valk (h.devalk@invs.sante.fr)
Daniel Lévy-Bruhl (d.levybruhl@invs.sante.fr)

Version: 3 Date: 13 December 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
“Influenza vaccination coverage against seasonal and pandemic influenza and their determinants in France: a cross-sectional survey”

Dear Melissa Norton,

Please find enclosed the manuscript referenced above, which has been revised taking into account the reviewers comments. We would like to submit this revised paper for publication as a research article in BMC Public Health. This paper is 3570-word long, and includes 22 references, 1 figure and 3 tables.

As you will see, all revisions have been considered. These changes are explained in a separate document which encloses this cover letter and where a specific response is given to each individual comment. For more readability, changes in the revised manuscript appear in bold.

We hope that these changes will satisfy the reviewers and look forward seeing the paper published in BMC Public Health.

Yours sincerely.

Please forward all correspondence regarding this manuscript to :

Dr Sophie Vaux
Département des maladies infectieuses
Institut de Veille Sanitaire
12 rue du Val d’Osne
94 415 Saint-Maurice Cedex
France
Phone : 33 (0)1 41 79 69 98
Fax : 33 (0)1 41 79 68 72
s.vaux@invs.sante.fr

Thank you for your consideration.

Sophie Vaux, PharmD
The authors thank the reviewers for their comments.

**Response to reviewer: Ryan Malosh**

**Reviewer's report:**
Minor Essential Revisions
1. On page 5: "As many of 7 rings and 20 calls were made to each sampled phone number." should be changed to "As many as 7 rings and 20 calls..."

*Response:* The comment has been taken into account (page 5)

2. The second sentence in the first paragraph of the discussion section is slightly confusing. Changing the wording to "The main result of the study is the observed low influenza vaccine uptake of 16.3% (95% CI 11.4-22.8) among individuals less than 65 years old who are at-risk for complications due to influenza infection."

*Response:* The comment has been taken into account (page 10)

**Response to reviewer: Patricia Priest**

**Reviewer's report:**
Thank you for addressing my comments.
I have only one remaining unresolved question - about the sampling. I apologise if I am just missing something, but as far as I can tell, this is what was done:
1. 2800 numbers selected randomly from the telephone directory (stratified by region and town size) - let us call this group A.
2. Each of the numbers in group A was incremented by one, to create a list of 2800 numbers that hopefully included some unlisted numbers - group B.
3. Letter were sent to the addresses listed with the numbers in group A.
4. The numbers in groups A and B were called a certain number of times, and if someone answered they were asked whether the phone number was for a residential household, and if so they were asked to take part in the study. This would give 5600 numbers being called each month (A+B). However, the results say that 32,676 numbers were called, which (in the 12 month period) is 2723 per month. Please rewrite the account of the sampling so that the reader can understand exactly how the sample of phone numbers that were rung was arrived at.

Concerning the sampling, each month a list of around 2750 numbers was selected randomly from the French telephone directory. Each number was then incremented by one, in order to generate a list including also unlisted telephone numbers. This procedure (incrementation of the phone number by one) allow to keep the stratification by region and town size because these information are included in the first numbers of the phone number.
The point is that this new list (list B) replaced the first-one (list A). A letter was sent to the families concerned by the numbers of list B listed in the telephone directory.
As reported in the results 32,676 numbers were called during the survey. The number of phone numbers selected each month were not always the same as it was expected that participation rates by month would vary throughout the year: in summer notably, participation rates were expected to be lower because of holidays. More numbers were selected in order to reach the objective to include around 840 individuals.

For more readability we add the following information and rephrase: (page 4)

“Each month a list of around 2750 numbers was selected randomly from the French telephone directory. Each number was then incremented by one, in order to generate a list including also unlisted telephone numbers. This new list replaced the first one.”