Reviewer’s report

Title: Detection of events of public health importance under the International Health Regulations: A toolkit to improve reporting of unusual events by frontline healthcare workers

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Reviewer: Jose A. Fernandez

Reviewer’s report:

Overall:
The authors have tackled an important area not just for IHR (2005) compliance but also for day-to-day public health. In addition to helpful research, the authors have also provided a flexible toolkit, which is sorely needed in the field.

Major Compulsory Revisions:
On line 83, the authors state that "event reporting is a relatively new concept" but do not seem to back up that statement. As event reporting is at the core of the manuscript, a short justification for this statement and one or more key references is essential.

The authors do not appear to have considered including a review of the relevant legal and regulatory requirements for event reporting within European countries or within the EU writ large. This is unfortunate, as this prevents the manuscript from adequately addressing one of the two key areas that impact event reporting, namely existing legal and regulatory requirements (in addition to the attitudes and practices of public health, medical, and laboratory practitioners). Without the inclusion of this review/analysis, readers will be left without a complete picture of this topic. It is worth noting that the authors mention on lines 214-217 reporting requirements for frontline healthcare workers, suggesting that these in fact do exist in the countries in question. If the authors can adequately address this issue, then I would be able to recommend this manuscript for publication.

Minor Essential Revisions:
None

Discretionary Revisions:
Event though the authors focus on European countries, it would be interesting for them to cite one or two examples of event reporting in other countries. This would be a nice but non-obligatory addition to this manuscript.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.