Reviewer's report

Title: The FIFA Women's World Cup in Germany 2011 - A practical example for tailoring an event-specific enhanced infectious disease surveillance system

Version: 3 Date: 19 June 2012

Reviewer: Sarah Thackway

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   Yes, the question is an interesting one and worth exploring.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   The methods are reasonable, although the section is long and would benefit from editing.

   The authors note that district health authorities were asked about existing resources. Can this be explained? Does it refer to public health staff numbers and/or training, infrastructure, emergency preparedness, other?

   The statement about the 2006 World Cup on page 7 requires a reference.

   The statement about ‘certain measured that seemed appropriate’ requires more explanation on what the criteria was used to determine if measures were appropriate or not.

3. Are the data sound?
   The results are mainly qualitative, which is relevant for this sort of work. This section is long and would benefit from editing.

   The results include a mix of methods and results and these should be separated.

   On p.9 the authors note that ‘cases directly associated with the World Cup were to be tagged’. Does this refer to players, team support staff, or spectators? Does ‘Directly associated’ refer to being linked to a stadium or with travel to and from and during the event?

   Page 11 refers to 2 cases of measles as an ‘outbreak’ this would appear an over assertion even if the cases were linked.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   Yes, this appears so

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes, this section of the paper is good and informative. It is important to discuss varying levels of surveillance based on the outcomes of a detailed risk assessment.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
Yes

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Generally.

The authors refer mainly to the previous experience in Germany but do provide references to other planned mass gatherings.

There is no reference to the detailed documents released that described the surveillance aspects of the Beijing or Athens Olympic Games. These would be helpful to refer to in the background as they provide the extent of surveillance that could be undertaken for the large mass gatherings.

The authors references 13 and 18 are not clearly linked to the paper.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Generally yes. Refer to issues below:

- In attempting to summarise the background the authors have deleted important considerations for the need for enhanced surveillance activities. For example the authors have not included reference to the following factors: duration, season and crowding. The authors refer to ‘participants origin’ and it is assumed this refers to the country of residence of players, team support workers and spectators, however, this requires clarification.
- Also in the background the authors note that the women’s world cup was ‘substantially smaller’, does this refer to the number of competitors, spectators or other?
- Could the authors explain why the enhanced surveillance was conducted only Monday – Friday and what provisions were undertaken to ensure timely reporting of an incident of public health concern on a weekend?
- The results refer to world-cup outbreaks. Can the authors be clear this relates to ‘infectious diseases’?

9. Is the writing acceptable?
The paper requires editing prior to publication. Examples of poor language are:
- ‘common consensus’ this is a tautology.
- Last paragraph on Page 5 ‘Developed (Germany …) is missing the word ‘country’
- Government-developed SurvNet: is not clear
• Page 6: ‘The aim of our description was therefore to …’

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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