Reviewer's report

Title: Preventing malaria in international travellers: an evaluation of published guidelines

Version: 2
Date: 11 August 2014

Reviewer: Guido Calleri

Reviewer's report:

• Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)
  1. An overall evaluation of examined guidelines, both from the methodological and the practical point of view, could be included in the discussion and would be interesting for readers.

• Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
  2. Annex 1 is presented as “annex 2: consensus between…” in the title

• Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
  3. Only guidelines published in English language are considered which which actually limits this study to the Angle-saxon world (besides WHO): this is a major bias in the perspective of current recommendations for malaria prophylaxis. Actually German speaking countries guidelines significantly differ from classic recommendations (WHO, CDC, etc.), and this school is highly considered all over the world, since it better takes into account risk and benefits of chemoprophylaxis. Also Swedish, Danish and Italian guidelines (incidentally, the latter have been published in English in the journal INFECTION on December 18th, 2013, a few days before or after the Authors’ search was done) move in the same direction. If this part cannot be considered by the Authors, this fact should be clearly stated as an important limitation, and mentioned even in the paper’s title.
  4. Guidelines for insect bite prevention and chemoprophylaxis have been examined in detail, but the core-question has not been addressed, which is, in my opinion, when to recommend malaria pills, and when not to do so. This topic has been approached in a recent paper (Calleri G. Malaria prophylaxis and guidelines. Infection. 2014 Jul 18. [Epub ahead of print] PMID:25033938) which might be taken into account.
  5. Stand-by emergency treatment and early diagnosis, which are among the mainstay of malaria prevention, according to WHO, are not even mentioned in the paper, while they are reported in all guidelines. Also these issues must be addressed.
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 received a grant for speaking by Sigma-Tau S.p.A.