Author's response to reviews

Title: Investigation of an Influenza A (H3N2) Outbreak in Evacuation Centres following the Great East Japan Earthquake, 2011

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Author's response to reviews: see over
06 January, 2014

Dr Natalie Pafitis  
Executive Editor, BMC Public Health  
BioMed Central  
236 Gray’s Inn Road, London WC1X 8HB

Dear Dr Pafitis

Re: MS1272534689101964 Investigation of an Influenza A (H3N2) Outbreak in Evacuation Centres following the Great East Japan Earthquake, 2011

Please find enclosed our revised manuscript titled “Investigation of an Influenza A (H3N2) Outbreak in Evacuation Centres following the Great East Japan Earthquake, 2011” for consideration as Research Articles for publication in BMC Public Health.

Authors were highly grateful for the editor’s comments that give us to improve the quality of our manuscript. Revisions in the text are preserved as tracked changes. In following pages are our point-by-point responses to each of the comments.

We hope that the revisions in the manuscript will be sufficient to make our manuscript suitable for publication in BMC Public Health.

We shall look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

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Editor’s comments

A. The abstract requires some editing for English expression:
1. "None of deaths were reported in this outbreak." should be "No deaths were reported in the outbreak".
2. "in average" is used twice, but I think the authors mean "on average".

We appreciate this comment. We modified these as instructed.

B. Page 5, the following sentence has three problems:
"In Japan, influenza has been monitored under national sentinel surveillance with approximately 5000 sentinels [10] and the estimated number of influenza outpatients was higher among children less than 10 years while approximately 45% of influenza inpatients were the elderly aged over 70 years [11]."

1. What do you mean by "5000 sentinels"? Do you mean "5000 sentinel sites"? Please express more clearly.

We appreciate this comment. We modified this as instructed.

2. The epidemiological information about age, I think you mean "incidence" rather than "number"?

We appreciate this clarification. This sentence was referred to the information released in the national surveillance report. The figure of influenza outpatients was calculated as the number. To avoid misunderstanding that this figure included a denominator (such as census population), we used “estimated number” rather.

3. Please include a reference time period for the epidemiological information.

We appreciate this comment. We modified this as instructed.

C. Page 5, the words "rather than" should be changed to "compared with" in the following sentence:
"Studies regarding influenza-associated mortality revealed that a higher impact was associated with influenza A(H3N2) rather than other seasonal influenza viruses [16, 17]...
We appreciate this comment. We modified this as instructed.

D. Page 6. There is a double full stop "..".

We appreciate this comment. We remove one period as instructed.

E. Table 1. The "*" in the table headings does not correspond to the "*" in the footer.

We appreciate this comment. We modified this as instructed.