Author’s response to reviews

Title: Health burden and economic impact of measles-related hospitalizations in Italy in 2002-2003.

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
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Dear Dr Phillips,

Thank you for accepting our manuscript for publication in BMC Public Health and thank you to both reviewers for their suggestions for improving the manuscript. Please find attached a revised version of the manuscript, in which the final comments have been addressed.

Below is a list of the changes made with respect to each point.

1. Please add in the methods section the definition of “measles without mention of complications” i.e. that these are measles cases without other secondary diagnoses. Also, add which diagnoses (not coded by measles ICD codes) were regarded as measles complications.

As suggested, we added in the text that non complicated measles cases did not have any secondary discharge diagnoses. We also added the list of ICD9-CM codes regarded as measles complications (see Additional file 1) and this is mentioned in the manuscript.

In addition, in the Methods section, the heading “Complications” was changed to “Diagnoses/Complications” and the following sentence was added: “A listing was made of all main and secondary discharge diagnoses recorded in measles hospitalizations.”

2. Shorten the discussion; the paper, in particular the discussion section is long. It could be reduced without losing information.

The Discussion has been slightly shortened as suggested, without deleting any important information. The current manuscript length is 3270 words, compared to 3517 words in the previous version.

Regarding ethical approval, hospitalization data are held by the Ministry of Health, who provided the individual records without any patient identifiers. The data used in this study is therefore anonymous, and no ethical approval was required for the study. We have added an Acknowledgements section, in which we acknowledged the Ministry of Health for providing the data.

Kind regards,

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