Reviewer's report

Title: Outpatient Antibiotic Prescribing in the United States: 2000 to 2010

Version: 1 Date: 18 March 2014

Reviewer: Marie R Griffin

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Major compulsory revisions
1) Abstract and intro attribute changes in antibiotic prescribing to the national campaign. Some of decline post 2000 likely due to introduction of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine for children. Other temporal trends also possibly responsible. Language should reflect that causal relationship not established between campaign and observed trends.
2) Although there is quite a bit of detail on the survey, it is not clear if info is collected in real time or retrospectively and if the latter over what period. This needs clarification.
3) Explanation for evaluating antibiotics and visits should be in intro/discussion not methods. Authors again neglected the possible effects of the pneumococcal vaccination program on visits for bacterial infections including otitis media and pneumonia.
4) Clearly, there are very different trends for antibiotics for ARI and for other indications. Given substantial decline in antibiotics used for ARI, there must be an increase for other indications. What accounts for this?

Minor Essential
1) Figure 2 is hard to follow -- not clear what the horizontal lines are for -- they make the figure more complicated and are not described in the legend
2) although CIs suggest large numbers, should include in results numbers included in the survey
3) page 17 2nd para includes an incomplete sentence
3) power to detect changes in ARTI visit rates in specific age groups was limited --most the of confidence intervals for these estimates were very wide and all the point estimates were <1

Discretionary
1) Trends for all antibiotics and those for ARI are very different, but we don't get to see the latter. This information could be added to figure 1-- bottom part of each bar could be antibiotic prescriptions for ari --this would make a more informative graph

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.