Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1
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Reviewer: Betsy Foxman

Reviewer's report:

The authors present results of an analysis of MEPS characterizing antibiotic purchases in the United States by time, age, antibiotic class and if prescribed for acute respiratory infections. The manuscript would be more compelling if the authors reviewed the literature more thoroughly in order to make a more compelling story for presentation.

Specific comments are shown, below.

Abstract: I suggest putting what proportions of broad-spectrum antibiotic prescribing increased over the study period.

Methods: More details on MEPS would be useful, in particular, how these data are extrapolated to country-level estimates. Assumedly there are weights; what is the structure of the data used by the investigators for their analyses (already extrapolated for population estimates?) In addition, some particulars regarding the MPS which was used for the ARTI analyses.

Results
p. 11 – last paragraph, should specify what age ranges correspond to adults and older adults.

Discussion: The authors state that antibiotic prescribing data were based on antibiotic purchases. Thus, prescribing is likely under estimated. As this is an important point for interpretation the authors should refer to antibiotic purchases rather than prescriptions throughout the manuscript.

Tables and Figures
Titles should be complete, including data source, and study period, so tables can stand alone. Titles could be made more informative; they should also not include abbreviations.

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 I have no competing interests