Reviewer's report

**Title:** Perceived morbidity and community burden after a Chikungunya outbreak: the TELECHIK survey, a population-based cohort study

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 31 August 2010

**Reviewer:** Jean-Paul Boutin

**Reviewer’s report:**

1- **Major Compulsory Revision.**

The main outbreak took place between November 2005 and June 2006. The initial investigation "SEROCHIK survey" was conducted between August and October 2006. The "TELECHIK survey" reported here, was conducted between November 2007 and May 2008. So the authors can claim (line 175) that the average time between SEROCHIK and TELECHIK is 16 months (range 13-20 months). However, data collected, analysed and presented in this paper does say that this study has been done "two years after infection (Abstract, line 48) or that the study was done" two years after the fall of the epidemic "(Abstract, line 34) or "nearly two years after the onset of infection" (Discussion, line 230; or Conclusion, line 335) because no data presented here does not specify the expected date of infection by CHIKV, nor that this data was collected for CHIKV + patients, and TELECHIK began 16 months after the fall of the epidemic.

Authors should be wary of this approximation, although it is tempting to say that this study has been made "about" two years after the health catastrophe suffered by the islanders. In practice TELECHIK was probably conducted at the earliest, 17 months after the suspected infection of last patients (if infected in June 2006 and interviewed in November 2007) and later, 30 months after the suspected infection of first patients (if contaminated in November 2005 and questioned in May 2008). However, it is risky to say that the average time between 17 and 30 months is just 24 months!

Authors should revise these statements, or provide additional data.

2- **Minor Compulsory Revisions.**

In Methods:

A more explicit definition of subjects “NKP” and “NKN” is desirable. An example would be useful.

In Results:

The age distribution of participants (line 170) and their sex ratio (line 172) does seem, a priori, not representative of islanders’ population when comparing the distributions of Table 1. What is it really?

In Discussion:

Line 326; reference 17 does not seem good. Is this not rather reference 16?
In References:
Line 462; correct the year of publication in reference 28.

In Tables:
All tables have the same layout problem. The right column is always truncated.

3- Discretionary Revisions
None

Which journal?: Appropriate or potentially appropriate for BMC Medicine: an article of importance in its field

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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.
Signed: Jean-Paul Boutin