Reviewer’s report

Title: Usefulness of case reports in managing emerging infectious disease

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Reviewer: Geoff Wong

Comments to authors:

General comment.
Prof Wiwanitkit has made excellent points about the value of case reports in emerging infections, drawing on recent outbreaks, such as H1N1 and SARS to illustrate his point.

As such the overall thrust of the editorial is ideal for the JMCR.

Specific points.
1) The manuscript does need some English Language editing
2) Does an editorial need an abstract? I will leave this decision to the editorial team as I am not sure about JMCR policy on this
3) It might be worth being clearer about the exact value of case reports.
   As Prof Wiwanitkit points out, in the early stages of a 'new outbreak' there may be no more information available than a few cases and so the purpose of the case report here is as a 'signal' emerging from the background noise. This issue of a case report potentially being a signal maybe one that the JMCR can help with by having a fast-track publication process specifically for emerging infectious diseases and so my thanks to him for raising this point.

   He also rightly points out that case reports can be helpful in teaching and learning and research. These are not unique to case reports in emerging infections.

   In terms of research, case reports are unlikely to form part of a systematic review, but may contribute to our understanding of a new and emerging infectious disease through a case series review. In addition, the study of way an outbreak has emerged and hence possibly the new lessons that might be learnt, may be helped by an analysis of case reports.