Author's response to reviews

Title: An outbreak following importation of wild poliovirus in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China, 2011

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Version: 4 Date: 25 November 2014

Author's response to reviews:

Nov 12, 2014
Dr Jean-Claude Desenclos
Section Editors
BMC infectious diseases
Institut de Veille Sanitaire,
France
RE: MS: 1209743127146122
An outbreak following importation of wild poliovirus in Xinjiang Uyghur
Autonomous Region, China, 2011

Dear Dr Jean-Claude Desenclos:

Attached please find the revised manuscript entitled “An outbreak following importation of wild poliovirus in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China, 2011” for your review. We have revised the manuscript according to the suggestions of the reviewers. We try our best to minimize the overlap of content except for the description of outbreak profile. After revision, most of the contents have not been published, including retrospective searching of AFP cases (Figure 2), AFP surveillance performance before and after outbreak (Figure 1), polio cases distribution by SIAs conduction, surveillance of contacts or healthy population (table 2) etc. We concentrate on different main points with the papers published in other journals, such as age-specific incidence, immunization gap and AFP surveillance comparison etc. Prior publication mainly introduce the epidemic and emergency response measures, but this manuscript concentrate on assessing the merits and drawback of different measures, and on exploring the potential risks existing in polio-free countries. We think the manuscript can provide more information and suggestion for future work of polio eradication in the world. All changes have been detailed in the point-to-point responses to reviewers listed on the following pages.

My coauthors and I would like to thank the reviewers for their expert opinions. We believe that this manuscript has been improved by this revision. Thank you very much for agreeing to review our revised manuscript.

Sincerely,

Hui-Ming, Luo

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Response to Reviewer and Editor Comments:

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An English-speaking colleague has helped me edit my revisions, and she is also one of our co-authors.

We would be grateful if you could address the comments in a revised manuscript and provide a cover letter giving a point-by-point response to the concerns.

Please also ensure that your revised manuscript conforms to the journal style (http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/ifora/medicine_journals ). It is important that your files are correctly formatted.

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Reviewer's report
Title: An outbreak following importation of wild poliovirus in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China, 2011
Version: 2
Date: 14 November 2014
Reviewer: Linlin Li
Reviewer's report:
Minor Essential Revisions
This study did a serological survey after a polio outbreak in 2011 in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China. Genetic analysis of the VP1 region from index case confirmed that the polio strain was imported from Pakistan. It represented good supplementary data to the 2013 NEJM paper. Nevertheless, the data presentation is somewhat confusing. The authors should work on a more clear and precise way to present the data.
Original Figure 1 is deleted from our manuscript. We just introduce the history of polio eradication in China as the background and it is not generated based on our research data. Therefore, it is not necessary to cite the Figure in our manuscript.

Original Figure 4 was also deleted from our manuscript. In the discussion, we cited the serological survey reference if serological data is necessary.

1. Obviously, majority of the data from Figure 1 was not from your current study. The only reference listed was [1]. If you want to include the figure, please refer to the source of the data in more detail.

We agree with reviewer’s suggestions and delete Figure 1 from our paper. However, reference is kept in our manuscript to introduce the history of polio eradication in China. It is necessary to show the basic history in background section.

2. Figure 3: Non-polio AFP, not 'non-AFP'

It is “non-AFP” rather than “Non-polio AFP”. In Figure 2 (original Figure 3), AFP cases includes non-polio AFP cases and polio cases. During retrospective AFP case finding, the staffs were too sensitive and included all the potential cases as possible as they can. However, lots of cases searched by staffs were judged by provincial Polio Expert Committee to not meet the definition of AFP cases. Therefore, these cases wrongly searched were described as non-AFP cases in Figure 2 (original Figure 3).

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

An English-speaking colleague has helped me edit my revisions, and she is also one of our co-authors.

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.

Reviewer's report
Title: An outbreak following importation of wild poliovirus in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China, 2011
Version: 2
Date: 3 November 2014
Reviewer: Beatrix Kapusinszky
Reviewer's report:

Dear Editor,
The paper by Hai-Bo Wang and Hui-Ming Luo “An outbreak following importation of wild poliovirus Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China, 2011” deals with a very important topic of wild poliovirus transmission to non-endemic area, and the healthcare system preparedness to control and monitor the infection spread.

Major Compulsory Revisions

There are a couple of gaps in the paper, after thoughtful reading, the reader could find all the missing answers in already published papers by the same group (only reference #1 and #3 cited in the manuscript, see below). The resemblance is too high: the study design, the same materials and results can all be found in the publications listed below. As the matter of fact, the figures and tables look exactly like or slightly modified as previously published. Table 1 is the same as Table 1 in reference #1, #3. Figure 1 is the same as in reference #4, Figure 4 is same as Figure 2 described in reference #2, etc.


After thoughtful review, the current paper does not provide any novelty and in fact it is a re-edited version of results and findings of previously published papers, therefore it does not seem appropriate for the publication, unless the authors can provide a strong argument to the contrary.

Original Figure 1 is deleted from our manuscript. We just introduce the history of polio eradication in China as the background and it is not generated based on our research data. Therefore, it is not necessary to cite the Figure in our manuscript.
Original Figure 4 was also deleted from our manuscript. In the discussion, we cited the serological survey reference if serological data is necessary.

Table 1 summarized the outbreak profile (including the number of wild polio cases and clinical compatible polio cases and the incidence of polio cases) which is the core information of outbreak characteristics and control. All the emergency response and discussion are based on the basic information. Therefore, table 1 was kept in all these manuscripts.

All the related references have been cited in our manuscript.

We have tried our best to minimize the overlap of content with the prior publications. Only overall outbreak profile is related with the paper in NEJM (2013; 369:1981-1990), and overall AFP surveillance data is related with paper published in BMC Infect Dis (2014 Feb 27;14:113-120).

After revision, most of the contents have not been published, including retrospective searching of AFP cases (Figure 2), AFP surveillance performance before and after outbreak (Figure 1), polio cases distribution by SIAs conduction, surveillance of contacts or healthy population (table 2) etc.

Most importantly, the in-depth data analysis and discussion are focusing on different point with the papers published in other journals, such as age-specific incidence, immunization gap and AFP surveillance comparison etc. We want to show the comprehensive analysis on this polio outbreak by epidemiological method, including the relationship between population immunity and WPV outbreak, the rule of accumulation of susceptible population, the reason for rapid controlling of WPV outbreak, how to conduct high quality AFP surveillance. Prior publication mainly introduce the epidemic and emergency response measures, but this manuscript concentrate on assessing the merits and drawback of different measures, and on exploring the potential risks existing in polio-free countries. We think the manuscript can provide more information and suggestion for future work of polio eradication in the world.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
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.