Reviewer’s report

Title: No MERS-CoV but positive influenza viruses in returning Hajj pilgrims, China, 2013-2015

Version: 0 Date: 06 Feb 2017

Reviewer: Harunor Rashid

Reviewer’s report:

This study provides interesting data on the burden of several respiratory viruses (including MERS-CoV) among Chinese Hajj pilgrims. Each year about 11,000 Chinese pilgrims are known to travel on Hajj, to the review’s knowledge this is the first study involving Chinese pilgrims, so this is a unique study and deserves publication primarily because of its uniqueness (even though the findings are not surprising). However the manuscript needs revision before being published. Editing of the language is a must, and the discussion needs buttressing in light of the findings of other studies involving Hajj pilgrims from France, Australia, Egypt, India and Ghana (refs: 1-5).

Limitations need to be discussed: varying specimens including sputum, pharyngeal swab, lower respiratory tract washes have been used, and more common viruses (eg, rhinovirus) were not searched.

In summary this is a unique study but needs revision before publication.

REFERENCES:


Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?
4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal