Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 1 Date: 15 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Joshua Petrie

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript, particularly the background and discussion, are much improved. However, there are still a couple outstanding issues that I think could be clarified.

Abstract - Line 49: As reviewer 2 noted the sentence "However, there was no significant difference among three years for respiratory virus positive participants" needs to be more specific. It appears the authors revised this language elsewhere, but the abstract needs to be clear as well. What is the difference?

Lines 86-94: The participant selection is still a little confusing. Were all 847 randomly selected and 16 of these happened to have fever? If so, stating again that the pilgrims without symptoms were randomly selected is confusing (lines 93-94). If this is correct, I suggest revising to "The remaining 831(?) returning pilgrims did not have fever or any other symptoms."

Lines 104-106: The testing strategy for viruses other than influenza and MERS was not clear before. It is better now, but I recommend adding a row to the table that lists the number with fever each year and include a footnote that indicates that all pilgrims were tested for influenza and MERS, but only those with fever were tested for the other viruses.

Lines 116-117: This is related to my first comment on the Abstract. This sentence does not state what the difference was, and should be more specific. It should include something about how influenza A was more likely to be detected among participants with fever. In fact, no influenza B infections were only identified among pilgrims without symptoms.

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.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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