Reviewer’s report  

Title: Respiratory Syncytial Virus tracking using Internet Search Engine Data

Version: 0 Date: 24 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Nusrat Homaira

Reviewer's report:
The authors present important method of detecting RSV activity in the community.
Methods: I am unclear about how the geographical variation in different data sets used in the analyses were accounted for and then how was this interpreted, for e.g two of teh data sets were only for Arizona while lab data were for five states and the NREVSS RSV data were for all 50 states and not sure how much the Google data covered.

It's surprising to me that the for a list of keywords the authors did not include ARI or ALRI (two of the most commonly used terms)

In estimation of the RSV incidence the authors make the assumption that similar diseases burden will result in a similar volume of use of particular keywords, did the author consider the population demographics, States with more younger children (<2 years) are likely to have larger burden of RSV diseases or is it that population demographics is pretty homogeneous.

Results: I am surprised to see in the initial filtering of keywords section key words with highest correlations there is no mention of wheeze (under symptoms group)

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.
Unable to assess
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:
Acceptable

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