Reviewer’s report

Title: Meningococcal disease in Italy: public concern, media coverage and policy change

Version: 0 Date: 19 May 2019

Reviewer: Dean Whitehead

Reviewer's report:

Many thanks for the opportunity to 'invigilate' the further review required due to the divergent review feedback of the original two reviewers. To be quite honest, the first reviewer offers such minimal feedback that the review is of no use. Anyone recommending 'major review' should clearly articulate the nature and scope of revision required. Not to do so is just 'lazy' reviewing.

I am far more inclined to agree, overall, with reviewer 2. They offer useful feedback that the authors are best served following and making the proposed changes.

For me - this is a useful article and uses a reasonably novel content analysis approach. The strength of the manuscript is where it identifies a localised 'case study' of an international issue. The authors identify that it is the only 'Italian' study of its kind. I would lose that type of claim and, instead, replace it with - here is a good, localised example of what seems to be representative of the international context for many countries i.e media and health professional scare-mongering. My other few mentions for change are - stating 'some deaths' is not very compelling. Identify actual epidemiological stats. Stating 'using and ad hoc' code book approach doesn't sound very rigorous. This process needs elaborating on in term of rigour.

I trust that these comments assist

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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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