Author’s response to reviews

Title: Rates and Risk Factors Associated with Hospitalization for Pneumonia with ICU Admission among Adults

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Dear Ms. Marta Gritti,

Thank you for contacting us. Please find our response to your inquiry regarding the Funding section in the manuscript.

Editor Comments:

1. In funding section, you state: 'CDC participated in the design of the study, analysis, interpretation of the data, and writing the manuscript.'
If the role of the funding body was simply to provide the sources for these different parts of the manuscript creation, you can amend your statement into: 'The funders had no role in study design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript.'.

If the funding body had a role in influencing data analysis and presentation, then we would require some clarifications regarding this point, as it may generate a conflict of interests.

Response:

For this study we used data from the Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD). VSD is a collaborative project between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and several large health plans with the primary aim to collect information related to vaccine safety. VSD data is available for sharing with external investigators (https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/ensuringsafety/monitoring/vsd/data-sharing-guidelines). The CDC Influenza Division supplemented funding to the VSD sites to collect additional information on pneumonia hospitalizations and ICU admissions. The Influenza Division designed the study, data collection, and analysis collaboratively with VSD sites. Influenza Division investigators lead the drafting of the manuscript and the analysis.

Although for many studies the issue that you mention (i.e. the funding body having a role in data analysis and presentation) might be a reason for concern and a potential conflict of interest, we do not believe that this would apply to this study. CDC is a public health agency and our motive for describing rates of ICU associated pneumonia is that these data are critical for public health responses to emergencies. We're happy to answer additional questions as needed.

Thank you,

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