Author’s response to reviews

Title: An Evaluation of the Zambia Influenza Sentinel Surveillance System, 2011-2017

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Author’s response to reviews:


We thank the editor and reviewers for their many helpful suggestions for improvement of the manuscript. Our responses to each of the comments are outlined below, and changes to the manuscript have been effected. We believe we have addressed all of the concerns and suggestions.

Dear James Edwards
Thank you for the comments, here are specific responses to the comments.

Editor Comments:

1. Formatting
--Please rename the section titled Introduction to Background
--Please rename the subsection "Ethical approval" to "Ethics approval and consent to participate"
ANSWER: Thank you for this guidance, this has been done.

2. Consent to participate
In your “ethical approval and consent to participate” section, please confirm whether informed consent, obtained from all patients, was written or verbal and clearly state this in your manuscript. If verbal, please state the reason and whether the ethics committee approved this.
ANSWER: The consent obtained was verbal. This was non research and the procedures involved had no risks to the patient. The University of Zambia Biomedical ethics research ethics committee waived the need for ethical clearance. This statement has been included in the manuscript.

3. Ethical approval
In your “ethical approval and consent to participate” section, please clearly state that the named, appropriate ethics committees/institutional review board waived the need for ethical approval.
ANSWER: The University of Zambia Biomedical ethics research ethics committee has been included in the manuscript.

4. Role of Funders
Please note the role(s) of the funding body (bodies) in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing the manuscript, which should be declared in the Funding section.
ANSWER: This has been noted and roles for each funder has been included in the manuscript line 546-551.

5. Author initials
--In the “Authors’ contributions” section of the Declarations, please ensure initials match their provided names in the author list for this manuscript, in the correct order. For instance, an author named John Steven Doe, their initials should be represented as JSD in the “Authors’ contributions”; an author named Jane Ann Doe should be referred to as JAD. We note that author MAN is listed as ML in the Authors Contributions.
--Please include a statement in the Authors’ contributions section to the effect that all authors have read and approved the manuscript in its current state.
ANSWER: Thank you for this comment. This has noted and amended.

6. Remove supplementary file
Please remove the supplementary files “Review of Manuscript BHSR-D-02230R1 Letter.docx” and "Simusika - Surveillance Evaluation in Zambia - Cover Letter.doc" from the manuscript, as these files are not required to be attached to the manuscript at this stage of the editorial process.
Thank you for this comment. This has been done.

7. Clean manuscript
At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.
Answer: Thank you for this comment. This has been done.