Reviewer’s report

Title: The Changing Epidemiology of Dengue in China, 1990-2014: a descriptive analysis of 25 years of Nationwide Surveillance Data

Version: 3 Date: 10 March 2015

Reviewer: John Aaskov

Reviewer’s report:

While there is nothing in this Report that surprises, the authors have methodically quantified what, until now, has been only qualitative information. It is likely that a report like this would be highly cited.

Some of the Figures may not be essential but placing them as Additional Files is appropriate.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. While the authors have distinguished "reported" from "laboratory confirmed" cases of dengue, they have not discussed the magnitude of the error likely to exist in the number of "reported cases" and what this might mean for their conclusions. There is an extensive literature from Thailand, Myanmar and Malaysia, dating back to the 1960s, which identifies the difference between dengue cases diagnosed clinically, often by very experienced clinicians, and the number of these diagnoses that can be confirmed by laboratory testing. It has been our experience that between 30 and 90 per cent of "reported" cases of dengue in south east Asia do not have a dengue infection.

2. The authors might discuss, in greater detail, the issue of whether all dengue outbreaks in China are due to imported viruses or whether dengue virus transmission is endemic. Could one or two imported cases have initiated some of the huge outbreaks reported in China recently. What insights might be available in the dengue modelling literature?

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no competing interests