Reviewer's report

Title: The broader economic impact of vaccination: reviewing and appraising the strength of evidence

Version: 1 Date: 16 June 2015

Reviewer: Zulfiqar Bhutta

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting and important piece of work by Jit et al on estimating the economic benefits of immunizations. The methodology and background review work seems solid and there are few quibbles with the conceptual framework being proposed.

A few points as below may help the average reader of BMC understand much better the context and relevance of this work. I summarize below

1. It isn’t clear what the value of undertaking an economic benefit analysis of immunizations in isolation adds. Could the authors defend this? In almost everything that we do, immunizations are part of a repertoire of health and related interventions and therefore the model needs to take the incremental value of immunizations into account. In a detailed modeling exercise for impact of various interventions on childhood pneumonia and diarrhea, vaccinations including measles, pneumococcal and rotavirus vaccines were found to avert 20% of all child deaths at best, comparable to effects of nutrition, case management, WASH etc. Can the authors work this relative contribution out so we don’t overinflate the economic benefits of immunizations in relation to everything else? The authors acknowledge this as a limitation but don’t offer a satisfactory explanation as to why their approach is a real advance

2. How does maternal immunization fit into the conceptual framework and outcomes and does the framework take into account intergenerational effects?

3. I concur with the conclusions on the need for better information around behaviors post immunizations at societal level. I was hoping that the conceptual framework would also take into account issues related to adverse effects and vaccine hesitancy at a societal level and costs related to addressing these at population level.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

None