Author’s response to reviews

Title: The risk of morbidity and mortality following recurrent malaria in Papua, Indonesia: a retrospective cohort study

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Reviewer #1: I'm happy with the changes made by the authors in response to my previous comments, with the exception of point 4 on deaths that occurred away from the hospital. The information provided in the response to the point is very interesting - an estimated 18% (2/11) deaths occur away from hospital and are thus may not be recorded in the data.

The change that has been made to the manuscript on this point is superficial, and the manuscript should really be updated to highlight this information and its implications, as has been done in the reviewer response.

Response: We have now added the following sentences to the manuscript to highlight the importance of deaths occurred out of RSMM hospital (Discussion section, page 16, lines 338–344):

“However, the attrition bias in the detection of severe episodes of malaria requiring admission to hospital or resulting in death is likely to be low, since RSMM was the primary facility providing inpatient care in the region during the study period; this was confirmed by a community household survey of treatment seeking behaviour in 2005, in which 82% (9/11) of children who died in the preceding year were reported to have had done so at the RSMM hospital (11). We hypothesise that any attrition bias will be similar between patients with P. falciparum and P. vivax, hence the comparative hazards presented are likely to be valid and our estimates of mortality conservative.”

Reviewer #2: I believe the authors did a fantastic job in relation to answering my (and the other reviewer's) many queries. I'm glad many subanalyses were conducted, and I believe the paper is now much more clear and improved. Congrats!
Response: We are glad that the reviewer is satisfied with our revisions.