Dear Dr. Hanefeld

Manuscript ID BMJ.2017.039717 entitled "Trade as central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals: a case-study of antimicrobial resistance (AMR)"

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to consider this paper, which we discussed at our editorial meeting ***. We are pleased to make a provisional offer of publication if you are able to revise it to address the points made by the referees and the editors. The referees’ comments are available at the end of this letter, and the points raised by the editors are set out below.

1. McCoy’s review asked that you remove the SDG reference, and obviously this is the main point of the article. Can you make the link between this analysis of AMR and the SDGs more explicit early on?

2. The framework that you develop is not applied in the conclusion, can you reframe the discussion around that?

3. The analysis of the complexity of tackling AMR is evident, and you cite examples of this being done successfully. Can you expand on the role of think-tanks and civil society in those successes?

4. Can you state any lessons from this that readers in other sectors can apply?

We hope that you will be able to revise the paper and send it back to us by Wednesday 12th of July - please let
me know ASAP if this isn't possible, as we're working to a publication deadline of the 24th to coincide with the meeting in Chile.

When you resubmit, could you kindly ensure that you provide:

(a) A covering letter outlining how you have responded, or not responded and why, to both the referees comments and those of the editors.
(b) A word count (excluding the references and words in boxes and tables). You should aim to keep this count below or very close to 2000 words.
(c) Please check that all the information required in the manuscript (see note below) is included in the revised manuscript.

To revise your manuscript, log into https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bmj and enter your Author Center, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision.

You may also click the below link to start the revision process (or continue the process if you have already started your revision) for your manuscript. If you use the below link you will not be required to login to ScholarOne Manuscripts.

*** PLEASE NOTE: This is a two-step process. After clicking on the link, you will be directed to a webpage to confirm. ***

https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bmj?URL_MASK=88cf98c6000d4be2be0573bd89ed6c0c

You will be unable to make your revisions on the originally submitted version of the manuscript. Instead, revise your manuscript using a word processing program and save it on your computer.

Once the revised manuscript is prepared, you can upload
it and submit it through your Author Center.

When submitting your revised manuscript, you will be able to respond to the comments made by the reviewer(s) in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you make to the original manuscript.

IMPORTANT: Your original files are available to you when you upload your revised manuscript. Please delete any redundant files before completing the submission.

I hope you will find the comments useful.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely

Duncan Jarvies
djarvies@bmj.com

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

Recommendation:

Comments:
Thankyou for the invitation to review this paper.

I am sympathetic to idea that trade is a health issue. It is a big issue and I am therefore keen for the issue to be discussed in the BMJ. However, I’m unable to recommend this paper for publication.

I feel this paper falls between a number of different stools and attempts to cover too much without enough clarity about its purpose. It lacks structure and there are a number of places where sentences have been mis-constructed. Finally, in the case of AMR, the key drivers and mechanisms of AMR in the animal sector have not been fully described. For example, nothing has been said
about antibiotic use in farming, and what drives this.

The first paragraph of this paper is about the SDGs. I suggest you get rid of this. It's not really relevant to the paper, and you do not really discuss why and how trade is central to the SDGs. I would start immediately with the issue of trade, and perhaps just have one sentence for the SDGs, if you feel this is important.

A framework linking trade to health is important given the primary audience for this paper. You have described the links in terms of:

a) trade in commodities
b) trade agreement and provisions (which include IP rights, investment law and regulation)
c) trade in services, including the movement of workers
d) effects on the 'wider determinants of health

It is not clear where this framework comes from, but I would question its usefulness and conceptual coherence. I find it confusing and muddled because: a) and c) refer to the things that are being traded; b) refers to the rules of trade, or the way the trading system is regulated and governed; while c) refers to how a, b and c impact on health through the social determinants of health.

I think it would help to provide a more coherent framework, especially given the need to explain to readers that the term 'trade' itself is used differently from how it is commonly used and understood. For example, it’s important to explain that IP, finance and investment, public safety and immigration are now all policy areas that fall under the ambit of ‘trade’.

This point relates to another difficulty I have which is that the nexus between trade and health lacks contextualisation. For example, the trade-health nexus is not discussed in relation to the broader process of market liberalisation and globalisation; the extension of intellectual property rights into areas previously excluded; shifts in the structure and make-up of the corporate sector; and changes to the banking and financial sectors.

Unless this is done, it places too much emphasis on the
notion of ‘trade’ without explaining the relationship between trade and the regulation of markets and finance; or how the reach of trade law and policy has expanded because of changes in other areas.

Although I’m not convinced by the framework you use at the beginning of the paper, I found it odd that you didn’t apply the framework to the discussion about the relationship between trade and AMR. In any case, this whole section needs some structure for the reader.

Finally, I thought the conclusion was too vague, non-specific and self-evident.

Two more specific comments:

Paragraph 2: it’s more accurate to characterise problems with nutrition in terms of mal-consumption rather than over-consumption. The bigger problem is related to cheap, unhealthy and processed food. It’s more about the quality of food, not its quantity.

Paragraph 4: Why exactly is AMR ‘the classic ‘wicked problem’? I’m not convinced.

Additional Questions:
Please enter your name: David McCoy
Job Title: Professor of Global Public Health
Institution: Queen Mary University London
Reimbursement for attending a symposium?: No
A fee for speaking?: No
A fee for organising education?: No
Funds for research?: No
Funds for a member of staff?: No

Fees for consulting?: No

Have you in the past five years been employed by an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper?: No

Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper?: No

If you have any competing interests <A HREF='http://www.bmj.com/about-bmj/resources-authors/forms-policies-and-checklists declaración-competing-interests'target='_new'> (please see BMJ policy) </a>please declare them here:

Reviewer: 2

Recommendation:

Comments: Overall, I recommend the manuscript for publication, subject to the suggested edits and additional issues identified below.

On page 1, the manuscript describes the relationship between trade and health. I think the four points about evidence do not fully capture the literature and that it would be better to expressly point to these as examples to ensure that readers do not think this grouping is comprehensive.

On page 2 line 4 the paper refers to infringement of trademark protection. Infringement has a technical legal meaning and is not appropriate here. The claims are concerned with alleged inadequate trademark protection.

On page 2 line 6, nutrition guidance labeling is referred to. This is typically called front of pack labeling or
interpretive nutrition labeling and it may be better to use one of those terms.

On page 2, lines 11-14 there is a statement about principles of non-discrimination and Samoa. The Samoa example is misplaced here. The turkey tails ban was eliminated pursuant to a specific clause in Samoa's WTO Accession Agreement and not as a consequence of principles of non-discrimination. The line about principles of non-discrimination making it hard to limit availability also overstates the impact of the rule. The rule certainly disciplines government conduct, but saying that it is hard may be misinterpreted and overly discouraging.

On page 3, line 22 it is stated that trade agreements determine what is available in a country. This is putting it too strongly. Perhaps influence would be a better word than determine.

On page 3 line 36 we see the first of a number of references counterfeit. I suggest removing all reference to counterfeit from the document. In a technical sense, counterfeit refers simply to unauthorized use of trademarks and says nothing about the qualities of products. I think the focus here should be on sub-standard drugs not on trademark protection.

On page 5 lines 13 and 14 there is a characterization of an article as 'there was a risk for trade agreements to limit potential for public health regulation'. The analysis does not look at trade disputes, but at discussions in WTO Committees. This is a very important distinction because disputes clarify the scope WTO Members have for regulation whereas discussions in committee are just discussions. In this context, there is a risk that the language used is overly discouraging. It may be better to state that trade agreements should be taken into account in policy design.

On page 6 line 6 the manuscript refers to management and adjudication of intellectual property. WTO does not manage intellectual property. The organization does adjudicate disputes concerning protection of intellectual property.
On page 6 line 18, there is another reference to trade disputes on food labeling when this should refer to discussions.

On page 6 line 40 there is reference to declaration of a public health emergency of international concern. However, the statement that such a declaration allows for trade restrictions is not accurate. the IHR (2005) has no formal legal relationship with WTO law.

In addition to these specific comments, the following two general points should be addressed in the paper.

1) Standard setting bodies such as the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the OIE are central to the relationship between trade and AMR because WTO Members are obliged to base regulations on relevant international standards. Members also benefit from presumptions that their regulations are not more trade restrictive than necessary where their regulations are in accordance with relevant international standards. Hence, standard setting bodies are a forum central to this intersection and ought to be mentioned in this paper.

2) Free trade agreements could also play an important role because they typically liberalize trade in agriculture to a greater extent than WTO commitments and can include more specific obligations.

Additional Questions:
Please enter your name: Benn McGrady

Job Title: Technical Officer (Legal)

Institution: World Health Organization

Reimbursement for attending a symposium?: No

A fee for speaking?: No

A fee for organising education?: No

Funds for research?: No

Funds for a member of staff?: No
Fees for consulting?: No

Have you in the past five years been employed by an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper?: No

Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper?: No

If you have any competing interests <A HREF='http://www.bmj.com/about-bmj/resources-authors/forms-policies-and-checklists/declaration-competing-interests'target='_new'> (please see BMJ policy) </a>please declare them here:

**Date Sent:** 05-Jul-2017