

Response by British Thoracic Society to CRD/CHE Technology Assessment Group's Systematic Review and Economic Evaluation of Antiviral drugs for the treatment of influenza

This is a well written, wide ranging and balanced review of the use of anti-viral drugs for the treatment of influenza. The BTS has a few comments.

- 1) Influenza outbreaks can occur in closed communities (e.g. nursing homes and boarding schools) out of season. The use of neuraminidase inhibitors out of season in laboratory confirmed outbreaks should be permitted.
- 2) While influenza outbreaks typically occur between October and May in the UK, influenza occurs during winter and spring months in the southern hemisphere and probably all year round in equatorial regions. Tourists and other travelers could therefore present at any time of year with influenza.
- 3) More research is required on the effectiveness of anti-viral drugs in very high risk individuals such as individuals with major immunosuppression, and in individuals with influenza pneumonia.