Author's response to reviews

Title: Sequential introduction of single room isolation and hand hygiene campaign in the control of methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus in intensive care unit

Authors:

Vincent CC Cheng (vcccheng@hkucc.hku.hk)
Josepha WM Tai (taiwm@ha.org.hk)
WM Chan (chanwm4@ha.org.hk)
Eric HY Lau (ehylau@hku.hk)
Jasper FW Chan (jaspchan@gmail.com)
Kelvin KW To (kelvinto@hkucc.hku.hk)
Iris WS Li (dririsli@yahoo.com.hk)
PL Ho (plho@hkucc.hku.hk)
KY Yuen (kyyuen@hkucc.hku.hk)

Version: 7 Date: 6 September 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Melissa Norton, MD
Editor-in-Chief
BMC-series journals

Re: Sequential introduction of single room isolation and hand hygiene campaign in the control of methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus in intensive care unit

Thank you for revising our manuscript. The responses to the Editorial and reviewers’ comment are listed in the point to point reply below. The revision is marked as yellow in the revised manuscript. The manuscript has been edited by a native English speaking person and we also showed the grammatical improvement in track change format for your easy reference.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Dr. Kwok-Yung Yuen
Department of Microbiology
The University of Hong Kong
Corresponding author
Editorial comments:

* Further consideration of your manuscript is conditional on improvement of the English used. Please ensure particular attention is paid to the abstract. You should have a native English speaking colleague help you with this, if possible, or use a commercial copyediting service. Examples are those provided by the Manuscript Presentation Service (www.biomedes.co.uk), International Science Editing (http://www.internationalscienceediting.com/) and English Manager Science Editing (http://www.sciencemanager.com/). BioMed Central has no first-hand experience of these companies and can take no responsibility for the quality of their service.

**Ans:** The manuscript has been edited by a native English speaking person and we also showed the grammatical improvement in track change format for your easy reference.

* Acknowledgements ? Please acknowledge anyone who contributed towards the study by making substantial contributions to conception, design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, or who was involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content, but who does not meet the criteria for authorship. Please also include their source(s) of funding. Please also acknowledge anyone who contributed materials essential for the study.
Authors should obtain permission to acknowledge from all those mentioned in the Acknowledgements.
Please list the source(s) of funding for the study, for each author, and for the manuscript preparation in the acknowledgements section. Authors must describe the role of the funding body, if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; and in the decision to submit the manuscript for publication.

**Ans:** No acknowledgement is needed in this manuscript.

* Ethics - Experimental research that is reported in the manuscript must have been performed with the approval of an appropriate ethics committee. Research carried out on humans must be in compliance with the Helsinki Declaration (http://www.wma.net/e/policy/b3.htm), and any experimental research on animals must follow internationally recognized guidelines. A statement to this effect must appear in the Methods section of the manuscript, including the name of the body which gave approval, with a reference number where appropriate.

**Ans:** This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Queen Mary Hospital. It is mentioned in the revised manuscript.
Reviewer's report
Title: Sequential introduction of single room isolation and hand hygiene
campaign in the control of methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus in intensive care unit
Version: 3 Date: 27 June 2010
Reviewer: Henrik Westh
Reviewer's report:
Fine revision.
Minor Essential Revisions; On page 15 line 5 the authors write colonized or infected with ESBL. In the rest of the paper the only write infected with ESBL. What is it?

Ans: Thanks. It is a typing error and the term “colonized” has been deleted in the revised manuscript.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
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 that I have no competing interests.

Reviewer's report
Title: Sequential introduction of single room isolation and hand hygiene campaign in the control of methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus in intensive care unit
Version: 3 Date: 21 July 2010
Reviewer: Jan A Kluytmans
Reviewer's report:
The authors have responded to most of my comments and redid the analysis. Interestingly this new statistical analysis changed the conclusions of the paper importantly. This underlines the importance of appropriate statistics, especially in quasi-experimental studies.
I agree with most of their findings and their conclusions.
I suggest one additional clarification;
1) the fact that ESBL was increasing despite the improved compliance with infection control may well be explained by an increase of patients who were already colonized on admission. The global trend of increased community carriage with ESBL is a good explanation for this. Since no admission screening was performed this cannot be further elucidated by the authors.

Ans: Thanks. The suggestion has been followed and the manuscript has been revised accordingly (page 16, highlighted as yellow).

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'