Reviewer's report

Title: Mycoplasma hominis necrotizing pleuropneumonia in an immunocompetent adolescent

Version: 2 Date: 19 April 2010

Reviewer: Thomas Atkinson

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Summary: This manuscript documents a severe necrotizing pneumonia in a previously healthy adolescent due to Mycoplasma hominis. While the case is dramatic and potentially interesting, the authors’ response to the previous critique is inadequate for the following reasons:

1. Although the version of the revised manuscript that I received does not include the title and author page, these are noted in the authors’ response letter. The term “immunocompetent” is inappropriate since this is something that must be demonstrated rigorously, while only a limited evaluation has been performed (Negative HIV testing, normal immunoglobulins). Curiously, none of the immunologic testing that has been performed is actually mentioned in the text.

2. The most important pieces of diagnostic testing cited are the PCR and TaqMan assays, which continue to be inadequately described – no details regarding sensitivity and specificity testing are provided. Unpublished tests of this type are unacceptable to establish diagnosis.

3. There continue to be numerous grammatical problems and unacceptable inaccuracies – for example in the first paragraph of the Background section, the authors state that the M. hominis genome contains 256 genes, which would be far smaller than that of M. genitalium, the mycoplasma with the smallest genome, which has about 470 genes. This statement also does not agree with information included in the abstract of the associated reference, which states that M. hominis has 537 coding sequences. The number of 256 genes apparently refers to a discussion of a purely theoretical minimal genome in that reference.