Reviewer's report

Title: Searching For the Elusive Typhoid Diagnostic

Version: 1 Date: 4 November 2009

Reviewer: Shanta Dutta

Reviewer's report:

General comments:
The article by Stephen Baker et al is a comprehensive, well informative and thought provoking review on typhoid diagnostics. The authors have critically analysed the potentials and limitations of existing diagnostic tests. Scopes for future studies were also extensively discussed with reasons.

In present situation, the diagnosis of typhoid fever is not very promising due to lack of suitable and ideal diagnostics, which is really a major global problem and needs to be addressed. Therefore the article warrants publication.

Specific minor revisions:
Line 51, Typhoid is caused by S. Typhi only, hence it is appropriate to replace "typhoid" with "enteric fever".

It is important to discuss about currently accepted "gold standard" (culture? serology? or DNA based test?) for evaluation of any recently developed typhoid diagnostics.

Line 129, It is unlikely that many people who get infected by Typhi or paratyphi A donot develop the disease- please modify the sentence.

Line 135, Blood volume required for culture is usually 5-10 ml (20 ml is too much), as ratio of blood vol and broth is important for culture.

Level of interest: An article of importance 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.