Reviewer's report

Title: Searching For the Elusive Typhoid Diagnostic

Version: 1 Date: 12 November 2009

Reviewer: Chigozie Uneke

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

Background:

1. The background section requires more information such as the specific regions of the world where typhoid fever constitutes a major public health problem. Readers will benefit more from the article if information is provided on the current global epidemiological status and statistics of typhoid including morbidity and mortality figures per year.

2. Since the manuscript is a review article, it is important for authors to include the description of the strategies they used to search, identify and assemble the publications included in the article. Issues such as date of the search, sources/databases used for the search, criteria for the selection and exclusion of publications etc should be adequately described to enable one to confirm or repeat the process.

Minor Essential Revisions:

Discussion section:

Typhoid infections: This section is well written, however readers will benefit greatly if authors would include information on the influence of other infections which usually occur concurrently with typhoid particularly in the tropics eg. malaria, enteric infections of viral origin and other bacteria species. This is important as they might affect the diagnosis of typhoid in such regions since their symptoms mimic those of typhoid.

Discretionary Revisions:

Conclusions section: Authors have made recommendations on the possible direction the development of typhoid diagnostics could follow; readers from developing endemic countries would however benefit from suggestions that could improve the diagnosis of typhoid within the limits of available resources. Such suggestions could be included by authors in this section.

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’ below.