Author's response to reviews

Title: Complicated malaria and other severe febrile illness in a pediatric ward in Libreville, Gabon

Authors:

Marielle K Bouyou-Akotet (mariellebouyou@gmail.com)
Denise P Mawili-Mboumba (dpmawili@hotmail.com)
Eric Kendjo (eric.kendjo@gmail.com)
Ariane Eyang Ekouma (ary-eyang@yahoo.fr)
Omar Abdou Raouf (depparmyc.uss@gmail.com)
Edouard Engohan Allogho (depparmyc.uss@gmail.com)
Maryvonne Kombila (valenyine_favry@yahoo.fr)

Version: 4 Date: 28 August 2012

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We would like to submit our revised manuscript in respect to the reviewer comments. All appropriate changes have been done as suggested by the referees. All authors have seen and approved the revised version. We hope that you will reconsider this paper for publication.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Libreville, 27th August 2012
RESPONSE TO REVIEWER 1

The number of children recruited with febrile illness, hospitalized with clinical malaria and with confirmed malaria is unclear in the abstract. For example, “A total of 418 children with febrile illness were hospitalized for primary diagnosis of complicated malaria. Only 56.7% (n=95) of the 168 patients treated as clinical malaria cases had Plasmodium falciparum positive blood smears. This should be made clearer.

“A total of 418 febrile children were admitted at hospital as malaria cases. After medical examination, 168 were diagnosed and treated as clinical malaria, among them only 56.7% (n=95) had Plasmodium falciparum infection.” See lines 36 to 39.

Similarly, the statement in the abstract "Overtreatment with antimalarial was 43% and only 29% of patients treated with both antibiotics and antimalarial had co-morbidities." should be made clearer.

Almost half (46%) of the children who received antimalarial therapy had negative blood smears. Likewise, antibiotics were prescribed without bacteriological confirmation. See lines 43 to 46.

Secondly, the concern by the second reviewer about IRB approval and use of oral consent in a study of more than minimal risk was not addressed. It would sound oral permission was sought for obtaining demographic data and non for use clinical data.

This sentence has been corrected as stated in the authorization obtained by health authorities: “Although it was a non invasive study, this oral consent was sought from the parents/guardians in order to obtain medical history and use the demographic, clinical and biological data that were reported on the CRF. Data were kept as confidential”. See lines 151 to 156.

RESPONSE TO REVIEWER 2

1. Line 76 Should be .. lower Respiratory tract infection: corrected throughout the manuscript.

2. Treatment: How is malaria treated in Gabon? The dose of quinine quoted (12.5 mg salt/kg/day, intravenous) is too low. This was an error; the dosage is 25mg/kg/day. See lines 140 to 141.

Results:

3. Line 118 – benefitted from…not for …; Corrected

126: which sex ratio?

Boys/girls

4. Can the main reasons for consultation be put in a table?

Main reasons for consultation have been removed from the results section and added in the first table.

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being Published

Corrections have been done throughout the text.