Reviewer's report

Title: Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus nasal carriage among patients receiving hemodialysis in Taiwan: prevalence rate, molecular characterization and de-colonization

Version: 2 Date: 3 July 2012

Reviewer: Ulrich Nübel

Reviewer's report:

Kang et al. performed 529 nasal samplings from 296 ambulant hemodialysis patients at two medical facilities in Taiwan, resulting in the retrieval of 20 MRSA isolates and a number of MSSA. MRSA de-colonization procedures were successful. All MRSA isolates were characterized by antimicrobial susceptibility testing, PFGE and SCCmec typing, and selected isolates representing specific PFGE banding patterns were typed by MLST and spa typing. Fourteen of the 20 isolates were related to only two strains (both of which were ST59), which previously had been found among community-associated MRSA in Taiwan.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? Yes.
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? Yes.
3. Are the data sound? Yes, as far as I can tell.
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes.
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? Yes.
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes.
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? Yes.
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Yes, except for a statement on MSSA in the Abstract, as mentioned below.
9. Is the writing acceptable? Yes.

Minor Essential Revisions:
- In the Abstract, it is claimed that 'patients with MSSA colonization in the first survey had persistent colonization of a genetically indistinguishable strain'. In the main body of the manuscript, however, it is not mentioned how many of the MSSA isolates were characterized genetically and by which methods.

Discretionary Revisions:
- The uncommon term 'genetically community strains' is used in the Abstract. As the Abstract will be published without the manuscript attached to it, and because
community-association needs to be identified epidemiologically rather than through isolate characteristics, I am afraid this may lead to misunderstandings.

Typographical errors:
- Results, third paragraph: delete 'among'
- Results, fourth paragraph: erythromycin
- Discussion, second paragraph: 'patients with at-risk for MRSA acquisition', delete 'with' and '-'

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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.