Reviewer’s report

Title: Dynamics of Enterococcus faecium Clones Colonizing Hospitalized Patients: data from a prospective observational study

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Reviewer: Lucia M Teixeira

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript describes the results of a prospective observational study comparing intestinal colonization by E. faecium in 3 patient cohorts. The findings are of interest and contribute with insights for a better understanding on the dynamics of acquisition and transmission of intestinal colonization by different clones of E. faecium during and after hospitalization. Overall, the work can be considered as an important source of information in its field.

Some aspects, however, deserve further clarification and may help to improve the manuscript, as commented below:

1- Detection of colonization by antimicrobial-resistant enterococci, especially those resistant to ampicillin, quinolones and/or vancomycin is usually a major issue, as a few genetic subpopulations of E. faecium with such characteristics have been found to cause the majority of nosocomial outbreaks. However, in the present study, most isolates were only defined as resistant or susceptible to ampicillin on the basis of growth or no growth on a selective medium containing both ampicillin and aztreonam. No further testing of ampicillin or other antimicrobials by standard methods is mentioned, except for the invasive isolates. The authors should comment on reasons for using different methodologies to characterize the different groups of isolates, and on the correlation between results obtained by the 2 methods used.

2- The writing of the manuscript is generally acceptable, but an overall revision is recommended for better usage of the English language in a few occasions and to delete statements that are repeated. Also, legends to tables and figures are very short: they should include additional information to better describe and help to understand the contents.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

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