Reviewer's report

Title: Acinetobacter baumannii nosocomial pneumonia: Is the outcome more favorable in non-ventilated than ventilated patients?

Version: 2 Date: 21 December 2012

Reviewer: David Wareham

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This manuscript compares clinical outcomes of two cohorts of patients with A. baumannii bacteraemia derived from a likely respiratory focus in ventilated and non-ventilated patients. The series is quite large and contains a diverse range of isolates as determined by the molecular typing studies undertaken. The data is new and would be of some interest to readers of BMC Infectious Diseases. To improve the manuscript I would suggest clarification and expansion of the material in a few areas

Minor Essential Revisions

1) The background section is astonishingly brief, with no mention of A. baumannii virulence factors or attributable mortality in bloodstream infections. Although the authors discuss this later, the background section should be expanded to encompass this for the general reader- details can be found in any of the recent review articles


Cerquiera. Insights in Acinetobacter baumannii pathogenicity IUBMB Life 2011

2) Were sputum samples processed for the presence of A. baumannii using a quantitative methodology? If so please provide details along with the criteria used to distinguish between infection and colonisation

3) Can the authors confirm that none of the bacteraemias in these VAP / NVHAP were not catheter associated bloodstream infections – this is by far the commonest cause of bacteraemia due to this organism.

4) Could the authors provide details of the duration of antibiotic treatment in the two cohorts and that there was no statistical difference between them

5) The impact of combination therapy – whether deemed appropriate or inappropriate should be analysed.

6) Please provide data on the 'miscellaneous' agents that were given and what was used in the treatment of carbapenem resistant strains. There is no mention of the use of either tigecycline or colistin, unless these drugs are unavailable in Taiwan this strikes me as odd, as they have been used extensively for the
treatment of MDRAB in other parts of the world with variable results (Gordon, A Review of Clinical and Microbiological Outcomes Following Treatment of Infections Involving Multidrug Resistant Acinetobacter baumannii with Tigecycline. Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy, 2009, Celik IH Outcome of ventilator-associated pneumonia due to multidrug-resistant Acinetobacter baumannii and Pseudomonas aeruginosa treated with aerosolized colistin in neonates: a retrospective chart review. Eur J Pediatr. 2012. Given the controversies that exist over the use of these agents I suggest that they are at least mentioned in the discussion

**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