Reviewer’s report

Title: Accuracy of Real-Time PCR, Gram Stain and Culture for Streptococcus pneumoniae, Neisseria meningitidis and Haemophilus influenzae Meningitis Diagnosis

Version: 1 Date: 18 October 2012

Reviewer: JULIO A VAZQUEZ

Reviewer’s report:

Discretionary Revisions:

- Authors mention in page 14 second paragraph that 4 specimens were defined as indeterminate by RT-PCR due to its cycle threshold value. However two of them were positive defining genogroup by RT-PCR and apparently they were still defined as indeterminate. Some type of discussion should be desirable in this context. Has the author done some additional analysis of those specimens? ctrA false negative has been already described (just in a few number of invasive strains) using the most common protocols and in addition, protocols for genogroup are generally less sensitive than ctrA protocols etc.

- The authors state in page 15 line 20 that "antimicrobial susceptibility testing requires that the pathogen be cultured" and the statement might be refined: there are data bases with public access for those genes potentially involved in resistance (particularly in meningococci) associating allele and susceptibility level, at least for penicillin, rifampicin and quinolones.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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