Reviewer’s report

Title: Virulence-related traits of epidemic Acinetobacter baumannii strains belonging to the international clonal lineages I-III and to the emerging genotypes ST25 and ST78

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Reviewer: Spyros Pournaras

Reviewer’s report:

The authors reported on the virulence of epidemic A. baumannii lineages belonging to major ICs and also to increasingly implicated genotypes.

The study is well performed and of apparent interest for the Journal’s readers and, also, the manuscript is well prepared and written.

I have to note that, although the described properties of Acinetobacter strains are known and despite the importance of A. baumannii as hospital pathogen worldwide, detailed pathogenicity data extracted from various different, genetically characterized international clonal lineages and emerging genotypes are lacking from the literature. In the era of the ongoing worldwide dissemination of multi-resistant Acinetobacter strains, relative pathogenicity differences between lineages would offer selective advantages predicting the predominance of specific Acinetobacter lineages.

I have only minor comments for the improvement of the presentation

Minor Essential Revisions

i) Line 53: better, “…are caused by a limited number of strains worldwide”.

ii) The Methods section is rather long and could be reduced in length

iii) In Table 1, I would suggest to note which MLST types belong to the same IC

iv) In Table 1, please check again the 55 and 55 isolates represented by strain no 3909 and 3957; their overall designation looks identical

Level of interest: An article of importance 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