Reviewer's report

Title: Rapid and robust phylotyping of spa t003, a dominant MRSA clone in Luxembourg and other European countries.

Version: 2 Date: 24 March 2013

Reviewer: Ellen Stobberingh

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Major comments:
The authors decribed a new typing method to differentiate Stau isolates with spa type t003. The new method differentiate within spa t003 several subtypes, whereas less variation was found with MLST and MLVA.

Unfortunately, information in terms of turn around time, time to availability of the results as well the time and the skills of the personnel needed to perform the test is lacking.

Also an advice when to use which method is not discussed. Is it cost effective to use the WGST as the routine typing method? or are the consisting methods sufficient in most of the cases and only in rare cases we need an aditional typing? The authors did not performed or mentioned PFGE data. Is for local epidemiology PFGE not useful?

In the table the conventional typing data were compared to the new method: in addition to the spa type and the MLST data, data on MLVA were reported. But no information or references are provided concernig the performance of the MLVA.

Until now WGST was used for spa type 003, and although it is to be expected that the method is also applicable for other spa type, data on the added value for other spa types compared to the existing typing methods is lacking.

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 have no competing interests