Reviewer's report

Title: Multidrug-resistant Gram-negative Bacteria and Staphylococcus aureus Colonization of Healthy US Military Personnel in the US and Afghanistan

Version: 1 Date: 19 November 2012

Reviewer: Richard Murphy

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for the opportunity to review this very interesting paper that improves our understanding of colonization with MDR pathogens in Afghanistan. It is an important new paper.

Abstract
There is an error; it should state that 100 personnel in Afghanistan were enrolled.

Introduction
I think most of the first paragraph could be removed without diminishing the article. I would avoid discussion of pathogens not identified in this manuscript such as the New Delhi strain.

Methods
I am not an authority on microbiology so another reviewer should comment on the microbiology employed.

Results
Well described. However I would reduce the emphasis on the MSSA and the non MDR gram negative organisms isolated because it is not the focus of the manuscript and does not add much to the importance of the manuscript.

Discussion
In general the discussion overstates the importance of colonization.

I would not infer from the study that you have determine a more appropriate antibiotic for use in prophylaxis (ie that penicillin is inappropriate and moxifloxacin is superior). These recommendations can only come from clinical trials.

I think it is somewhat premature to say that these findings should affect choice of empirical antimicrobial therapy by humanitarian medical groups working in the region, as you propose.

The discussion should be shortened.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.