Reviewer’s report

Title: Comparison of semi-quantitative and quantitative culture techniques for the diagnosis of catheter-related infections in newborns and molecular typing of isolated microorganisms

Version: 3 Date: 13 February 2014

Reviewer: Jane Turton

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for revising your manuscript following the comments of the reviewers. I confess I have some difficulty in understanding why Table 1 was added, and what it brings. I also have some difficulty in the concept of PFGE as a confirmatory technique - it is a comparative typing technique - do you mean that you confirm the same type from both the catheter and blood of the patient concerned? If so, please say so.

Putting the PFGE results in the supplemental material is not, to my mind, a solution. You need to select representative results and include them in the main paper.

Surely PFGE provides a means of seeing if there is potential cross-infection between patients (as well as demonstrating whether the organism from the catheter matches that from the blood) rather than ‘identifying clones of microorganisms in neonatal ICUs that are responsible for most of these infections’. This seems to me to be missing the point.

I would be grateful if you would consider these points.

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.