Author's response to reviews

Title: An outbreak of Extremely Drug-Resistant Pseudomonas aeruginosa in a tertiary care pediatric hospital in Italy

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Dear Editor,

thank you for the peer reviewing of the manuscript “An outbreak of Extremely Drug-Resistant Pseudomonas aeruginosa in a tertiary care pediatric hospital in Italy” by M. Ciofi degli Atti et al.

We have revised the text in accordance to the comments made by reviewers. Answers to their comments are listed below.

Reviewer: Nicholas Boire

- Lines 62-64. "...colistin in 22 patients, to colistin and amkicain in four..." Remain consistent in number use. Either type them all out here or use the whole number symbols. See similar problems in line 203-205.

  We have modified the text as suggested.

- Lines 161-163. Include manufacturer of the antibiotic disks used in susceptibility testing. Same with the MH II agar (line 163).

  We included manufacturers as requested.

- Line 206. Replace "4-year old" with "4-year-old".

  We have modified the text as suggested.

- Line 255. Please add a source for the sentence, "The first VIM (Verona integron-encoded metallo-b-lacatmase) type MBLS was reported..."

  We have added a source.
The source of this sentence is reference #26; we have clarified this issue in the text.

- Line 223. You mention that the 25 isolates belonged to 5 different genotypes. Were there any observations seen that correlate these genotypes to either severity or mortality?

We did not find significant differences of clinical presentation or mortality rate by genotypes. We have added this information to the text.

- Table 1 should be cleaned up slightly for easier reading. Examples include bolding subheadings in the first column. Also, the first row should be properly spaced vertically. The information is good, but can be presented in a better way.

We thank the reviewer for these suggestions, and have modified table 1 accordingly.

Reviewer: Rosa Prato

-Line 102, “… the annual point prevalence of HAI significantly decreased from 7.6% to 3.4% (p<0.001)”: this statement needs a reference or the indication that these are personal, not published data.

We have clarified in the text that data for years 2007-1010 derive from reference #15, while 2011 data are not published.

-Line 105, “From July to September 2011, five cases of bacteremia due to XDR-PA were reported in children with oncohematologic diseases.”: Is this not a study finding? It is a bit confusing here.

For the seek of clarity, we have removed this sentence from the Methods.

-Line 130 “Environmental sampling was performed throughout the outbreak period.”: I suggest to state the investigation period here or above in the methods.

In the results, we have specified that 22 environmental samples were collected in October 2011, and 13 in January 2012.

-Line 194 “… and 41% were male”: I prefer to read the prevalent figure (59% were female).

We have modified the text as suggested.

-Line 218, eliminate the comma before “after”.

We have made this correction.

-Line 312, “… approved”: this sentence seems to have not been completed.

We have modified the sentence as follows: “All authors read and approved the manuscript.”
Please also note that the revised manuscript includes line and page numbers; all authors email addresses are reported in the title page.

We have acknowledged the hospital staff who took part in outbreak investigation and control, without mentioning individual names. The outbreak investigation and control activities had no external funding.

Finally, as an Associate Editor of BMC Infectious Diseases, I would like to claim a 20% discount off the Article Processing Charge (APC).

Thanking you in advance for your consideration,

Kindest regards

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