Author's response to reviews

Title: Gastro-enteritis outbreak among Nordic patients with psoriasis in a health centre in Gran Canaria, Spain: a cohort study

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Dear BioMed Central Editorial Team

Thank you for good and valid comments from both reviewers. Below is a bullet list on how and where I have addressed their comments:

Review by James Stuart

Discussion, p 11
Mean is included instead of median. The apparent contradiction mentioned by the reviewer is discussed and information from recent reports that norovirus gastroenteritis may not be so mild in certain groups in the community and in hospitalised patients is added.

Discussion, p 9
I have added the AR by and number of people sharing rooms

Discussion, p 9.
The numbers on the table are corrected and in the text is results from those who became ill after 3 November added

Background, p 5
The period to define selection and the sentence is corrected according to the suggestions

P6 Language is corrected in accordance with the suggestions from the reviewer

Review by Ben Lopman

Methods, analysis, P6/7.
The method is clarified by examples, regarding who is in the denominator and the numerator.

**Methods, laboratory investigations, P 7.**

It is clarified that virological tests were requested, but not performed.

**Results - aetiology, P 10:**

1. It has been clarified that virological tests were requested, but not performed. Our belief that the outbreak is caused by norovirus is based on the fact that the clinical symptoms met the Kaplan criteria.

2. The section "aetiology" has been combined with "Laboratory results".

3. Information about the food handlers being non-symptomatic when samples was collected, has been added.

**Discussion, Pathogenesis and mode of transmission**

1. Microbiological confirmation was sought. Due to misunderstanding was samples not forwarded to Madrid as requested. We therefore had to use Kaplan criteria. The local laboratory did not have the means to run PCRs and ELISAs.

2. Second para: The references suggested have been added.

3. Interventions: The statement "the strict implementation..." has been changed as suggested by the reviewer.

**Minor essential revisions**

All language corrections has been changed as suggested by the reviewer

**Methods**

Potentials limitations raised by the restriction of exposure to 2 days have not been raised in the discussion. We believe it was a norovirus causing this outbreak. Given that this hypothesis is correct and the incubation period of norovirus is maximum 48 hours, do we not see any potential, major limitations by this cut off.

**Disease characteristics**

1. Information on time of onset of symptoms was collected. We therefore argue that chains of transmission are not overlooked.

2. We realized that it is more correct to use a 10 hours cut off and not 12 hours as I did in the initial analysis, to determine person-to-person transmission among persons sharing bungalow. When correcting this is it 6 persons that fell ill more than 10 hours after their roommate. This has been corrected for in the text.

**Table 1**

The language have been corrected in the table.

**Table 2**

We do not have information on time of recovery only date. Time is changed from 12-60 to 0-72 hours. This is explained in a footnote.

**Table 3**

Table 3 has been changed as suggested
Table 4
Chi-squared test for trend of strawberry jam dose response is added