Reviewer's report

Title: Streptococcal necrotising fasciitis from diverse strains of Streptococcus pyogenes in tropical northern Australia: case series and comparison with the literature

Version: 1 Date: 7 October 2004

Reviewer: Nancy F Crum

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

A very well-written paper regarding GAS Necrotizing Fasciitis. The major issue with the manuscript is the small number of patients. The authors attempt to draw conclusions regarding the clinical course and emm types among this unique population, but this is very difficult due to the limited sample size.

The authors note in the Methods, that the cases were prospectively identified, but then discuss a retrospective chart review; please clarify.

Please include data on the presence of toxins & genes encoding for the pyrogenic exotoxins A, B, and C.

Discussion is too long in relationship with the results section and rest of the paper; suggest shortening by 30%.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

The paper states that the study spanned 7 years, but then the years of 1994-2001 is noted which actually includes 8 years (were these years all inclusive?)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Reject because too small an advance to publish in any journal

Level of interest: Too insignificant to warrant publication in any journal

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
None