Author's response to reviews

Title: Bacterial isolates from blood cultures of children with suspected septicaemia in Calabar Nigeria

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The Editor
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SUBMISSION OF UPDATED MANUSCRIPT:
Re: “Bacterial Isolates from Blood Cultures of Children with Suspected Septicaemia in Calabar, Nigeria”

On behalf of my co-authors, I wish to submit the revised manuscript of our research article entitled “Bacterial Isolates from Blood Cultures of Children with Suspected Septicaemia in Calabar, Nigeria”. We have revised the paper to conform to the reviewers’ queries and advice. We have outlined below our responses to the issues raised by the two peer reviewers.

RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS REPORTS

**REVIEWER1: Ebunoluwa A Adejuyigbe**

Response to query #1:
This was a retrospective study. The following statement inserted in abstract to reflect the study design: “…a retrospective study of our patients’ records”

Response to query #2:
We have deleted “potentially fatal” from the result section of the abstract since study did not evaluate mortality.
We have included a conclusion statement to the abstract to read as follows: “Staphylococcus aureus and coliforms were the leading causes of septicaemia in children in this locality, and the third generation cephalosporins and azithromycin were shown to be effective against these pathogens”.

Response to query #3:
We have inserted the following statement in the results section: “We did not isolate anaerobes. Our laboratory techniques may not have been sensitive enough to detect obligate anaerobes”

Response to query #4:
We deliberately left out the sensitivity report of the other pathogens because we found the denominators per antimicrobial too small to make sense statistically. These figures could be misleading with very small numbers studied.

Response to query #5:
We have inserted the following statement in paragraph 2 of the result section to describe the variation of isolates by age: “The overall rate of isolation reduced with increasing age but the types of organisms cultured did not vary with age”.

Response to query #6:
Table 1 corrected to show that “group 1 – 2 months” is actually included in the age-group “1 month – 1 year”. Table 1 revised accordingly.

Minor Essential revision #1:
Paragraph 1 line 4 of introduction corrected to read “....those with asymptomatic bacteraemia…”

REVIEWER2: Shamez Ladhani
Response to major compulsory revision:
The following statement on local antibiotics policy included in discussion section paragraph 3: “The local antibiotics policy informed by that study recommends the use of gentamicin as the sole agent for initial therapy in neonatal septicaemia. This policy needs to be reviewed to include a third generation cephalosporin in keeping with the result of the present study”

Minor Essential Revisions:

**Introduction**

Page 4, paragraph 1, Line 2: “s” deleted from “presents”; “symptoms such as” also deleted.

Page 4, Paragraph 1, Line 4: the meaning of the sentence should read “...those with asymptomatic”. “a” was omitted from asymptomatic.

Page 4, Paragraph 3, Line 2: sentence revised to read “…suspected septicaemia. However, they lack…”

Page 4, Paragraph 3, Line 5: “…take a while” replaced with “…take about a week”

**Methods**

Page 5, Paragraph 1, Line 1: “1201” deleted; sentence now reads “…all consecutive blood cultures…”

Page 5, Paragraph 1, Line 3: corrected to read “..features..”

Page 5, Paragraph 1, Line 5: corrected to read “was” and “were”

Page 6, Paragraph 1, Line 1: reference details “(Fine gold et al, 1978)” deleted from text.
Results
Page 6, Paragraph 1, Line 2: corrected to read “are shown in Table 1”

Discussion
Page 7, Paragraph 3, Line 1: corrected to read “*in vitro*”


Page 7, Paragraph 3, Last line: revised to read “..a decade ago, which showed a sensitivity of 89.7%”

Page 8, Paragraph 2, Line 2: Space in place between “A recent..”

Page 8, Paragraph 3, Last line: sentence moved to previous line.

Conclusion
Page 8, Paragraph 1, Line 1: “again” deleted.

Table 1
Corrected to read “1 yr” instead of “I yr”

Thank you

Yours sincerely,

Dr Martin Meremikwu
For and on behalf of the all authors of the above-mentioned article.