Author's response to reviews

Title: Insufficient neutralization in testing a chlorhexidine-containing ethanol-based hand rub can result in a false positive efficacy assessment

Authors:

Gunter Kampf (guenter.kampf@bode-chemie.de)
Marc Shaffer (mshaffer@crl-inc.com)
Corinne Hunte (mshaffer@crl-inc.com)

Version: 2 Date: 19 May 2005

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Many thanks for having the above mentioned manuscript reviewed. As you have suggested in your e-mail we would like to address the comments by the reviewer point by point:

1. The study design is now made clear in the method section. The 3 substances were tested in 3 individual experiments. This is now clearly mentioned. Although in EN 1500 it is described to test 3 or more agents in a Latin square, we still think that a comparison as done in the study is justified. Test subjects were treated in paired groups. The same panel was used for all 3 treatments (hence paired). That is why we still consider the statistical approach to be justified. In principal, the reviewer is correct. A Latin square design would have been better. But since hands are artificially contaminated for each new experiment and since it was shown that this artificial contamination leads to a highly reproducible organic pre-load on volunteers hands, we consider the design to be not optimal but acceptable.

2. The table is now prepared in a more clearly session.

3. Our comments to design and statistics are provided above.

4. The manuscript was seen by an English native speaker and was improved throughout the manuscript.

5. The method section has been shorted according to the suggestion of the reviewer.

We hope that all changes are satisfactory and look forward to you final decision. If the statistical approach is still a problem with the reviewer we would have no objection to clarify this point directly with Professor Rotter. Another opportunity is may be to have statistical advice on this particular question.

With my best regards,

BODE Chemie GmbH & Co.
Scientific Affairs

PD Dr. Gunter Kampf