Reviewer's report

Title: A novel pancoronavirus RT-PCR assay: frequent detection of human coronavirus NL63 in children hospitalized with respiratory tract infections in Belgium

Version: 2 Date: 25 January 2005

Reviewer: Eric C.J. CJ Claas

Reviewer's report:

General

The authors have dealt satisfactory with my previous comments. I just wonder what happened with the 33 samples (29 patients) that have been omitted in the revised manuscript, but that does not alter the content of the manuscript. A few discretionary remarks have been added.

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

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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)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The sensitivity of the assay for NL63 is not very high (analytical sensitivity of 5 million copies per ml, maybe even worse in clinical samples). This may implicate that if a specific, more sensitive assay for NL 63 had been used, more positives might have been detected.

Page 7, final paragraph: I think "311 samples" should read 309.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests