Author's response to reviews

Title: Population-Based Laboratory Surveillance for Giardia sp. and Cryptosporidium sp. Infections in a Large Canadian Health Region.

Authors:

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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Dear Iratxe Puebla:

Please find attached our re-revised manuscript entitled “Population-Based Laboratory Surveillance for *Giardia* sp. and *Cryptosporidium* sp. Infections in a Large Canadian Health Region.” We have carefully reviewed all of the comments and recommendations of the reviewers and where deemed appropriate have made revisions to the manuscript. All of the changes to the manuscript are outlined by the Track-Changes function in MS Word. Several sentences have been added under Methods – Study Design that outlines the basis for performing stool tests. Several sentences have also been added to the Discussion that describe the use of population-based methods, the limitations of this approach and the impact that may have had on our study.

As per reviewers 1 and 2 concerns surrounding the determination and definition of incidence, we disagree with their concerns. This is supported by the third reviewer’s assessment. We would also like to add that the population-based surveillance approach has been widely accepted in the infectious diseases research community, and our design is very similar to that used by the Active Bacterial Core Surveillance Program of the American Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/abcs/methstart.htm). The data provided by this system (especially with respect to group A and B streptococcal disease and pneumococcal vaccination) has had a major influence on public health policy in North America. We believe that our decision to use these definitions and widely accepted standards should address Dr. Wade’s concerns.

We fundamentally disagree with the comments and suggestions of reviewer #2 (Dr. Basualdo) and as a result are unable to respond to his points. As noted by reviewer #3, the population-based methodology used for our study is not only sound, but is in fact arguably the best approach to establishing rates of infectious diseases in the developed world. We have recently used this approach to establish the regional population-based rates of a number of important infections and these works have been published in several high quality infectious disease journals (1-4).
We look forward to your prompt decision regarding the status on our manuscript.

Yours truly,

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