Reviewer's report

Title: Population-Based Laboratory Surveillance for Giardia sp. and Cryptosporidium sp. Infections in the Calgary Health Region.

Version: 1 Date: 21 February 2005

Reviewer: Juan A Basualdo

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)

1. Subject originality: The subject is not well defined. It may be adequate for the region, but it is by no means original in developing countries.
2. Methods:
   a. parasitologic: They are appropriate, well described and adequately detailed. The sample taking, from the parasitologic point of view is not enough to achieve an adequate sensitivity in detecting Giardia and Cryptosporidium.
   b. statistical: The total population is not clearly expressed at the beginning of the study period. The incidence rates should be calculated annually. Only one datum is expressed that does not evidence the annual rates of 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002. What year are the rates mentioned?
3. The procedure to take the sample and the statistical analysis are incorrect.
4. The objective: Definition of demographical factors: Only sex and age are considered as demographical factors. The objective does not agree with the title.
5. Incidence is determined, not identified.
6. The number of individuals making the population is not defined correctly.
7. There is a lack of clearness in the proportion of positive and negative samples for both Giardia and Cryptosporidium.
8. The type of design is not expressed.
9. The results are not categorized by gender and age.
10. There's no evaluation of the association between the outbreak of Cryptosporidium and the demographic factors.
11. In the case of Cryptosporidium the comparison of incidences is not understandable.
12. How can the authors affirm that the patients showed not repeat episodes?
13. Is the population of over 20 years old (n=36) representative of the total studied?
14. The Discussion is not consistent with the observations in the area of Results.

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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)

In the name of the parasites, "sp" should not be typed in italics

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests.