Author's response to reviews

Title: How long do nosocomial pathogens persist on inanimate surfaces? A systematic review

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Comments to reviewers

Susan Springthorpe

An explanation regarding the range of survival times is now included for each group of nosocomial pathogen in the results section. In addition, a statement on the benefit of surface disinfection has been added at the end of the discussion.

William Rutala

Figure 1 is now included. Information on relative humidity, temperature, test material and other factor with influence on the persistence are now described in the results. The suspending medium is now summarized in the second paragraph of the discussion. An explanation regarding the wide ranges is provided now in the results section. The transfer of pathogens from surfaces is now also described in more detail in the discussion (paragraph 3).

Bala Hota

Major points
1. The five additional sources of information were included.
2. Figure 1 is now included.
3. In paragraph 5 of the discussion there is now a more distinct evaluation of the role of environmental contamination.
4. The method section (“selecting studies”) provided already the information that only studies with experimental evidence were included. Especially in the discussion there is now a more distinct differentiation between “experimental evidence” and “observational evidence”. We hope that it is easier to understand now.

Minor points
The manuscript has been reviewed for grammatical errors and spelling by a native speaker.