Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of vancomycin resistant enterococcus fecal colonization among kidney transplant patients

Version: 1 Date: 28 April 2006

Reviewer: Janet Manson

Reviewer's report:

General
Review of Freitas et al., manuscript “Prevalence of vancomycin resistant Enterococcus fecal colonization among kidney transplant patients”.

This study describes the VRE colonization rates in Brazilian kidney transplant recipients, at three time periods after transplantation. It was found that fecal VRE colonization averaged 13.6% between all three groups, and that 50% of the VRE isolates were either E. faecalis or E. faecium. Enterococci are frequently associated with nosocomial infections, and infections remain the second most frequent cause of mortality in kidney transplant patients. It is hypothesised that gastrointestinal tract colonization of VRE occurs prior to the development of infection (see Gilmore and Ferretti, Science. (2003) 299:1999-2002), and therefore VRE colonization rates in transplant patients are of importance.

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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)

There are many minor essential revisions that need to be addressed before publication.
1 â€“ There are many spelling and grammatical errors throughout the manuscript. Some examples are: No capitilization or Italics of Enterococcus in the title
Spaces between E. faecalis and E. faecium in Abstract
Spelling of â€œhemodyalisisâ€ in abstract
Page 3 â€“ 3.4% should be 3.4 %
Page 3 â€“ 44% should be 44 %
Query â€“ should 80mg/400 mg actually mean 80-400 mg?
Page 4 â€“ would change ambulatorial to â€œfollow upâ€, or simply delete it.
Page 7 â€“ I would change first sentence of paragraph 3, to â€œfifty percent of all VRE isolates were either E. faecalis or E. faecium.

Page 10 â€“ E. gallinarum is in bold

Page 11 â€“ I would change first sentence of paragraph 3, to â€œIn our study, previous use of vancomycinâ€

Conclusion â€“ S. aureus should be written in full (and not in bold)

References â€“ There are no italics in the reference section

There are other mistakes but I do not have time to list them all.

2 â€“ I want to clarify the agar that was used â€“ was this bile eculin azide agar (BEA) ?
3- No mention is made of the results of the MICs that were done on the VRE. This is important information for inferring the potential genotype involved in resistance. I would add this data to the paper for completeness! Also it is not noted if any of the VRE were multi-resistant which again is important information.

4 â€“ Six tables are presented in the results however only 3 of them are cited in the results section. All tables need to be cited.
5 â€“ Table 2 â€“ All species names should be in italics. Also Enterococcus should not be in bold.
6 â€“ There was no control group in this study (i.e. healthy Brazilianâ€™s). It should be mentioned in the discussion what the prevalence of VRE fecal colonization is in healthy people in Brazil, or if this data is not available â€“ that this should be investigated to further understand these results.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

7 â€“ Adding the MIC data, and the inferred genotypes of the E. faecalis and E. faecium VRE could lead to
some points being added into the discussion about transferability of vancomycin-resistance, especially in the hospital environment where antimicrobial use provides selective pressure.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests