Reviewer’s report

Title: Epidemiological Trends in Nosocomial Candidemia in Intensive Care Unit (ICU) in Italy

Version: 1 Date: 11 October 2005

Reviewer: Hsiu-Jung Lo

Reviewer’s report:

General
This is a five-year retrospective study for understanding the distribution of Candida species causing candidemia in medical and surgical intensive care units. There is a significant shift in the species of Candida during the study period, which is an interesting funding. Unfortunately, there is very limited information regarding to specific risk factors for the selection of species causing candidemia. To guide therapeutic choices for candidemia, I believe that we need to know what cause this shift.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1. There are many possibilities to cause the shift of Candida species causing candidemia, such as, the methods of detection, population of patients, outbreak etc. It would be helpful to discuss these issues in the text. For example, it would be helpful to list the characteristics of patients including gender, age, disease, dose of antifungal drugs, type of parenteral alimentation and/or intravascular devise use, etc.

2. There is a significant shift of Candida species as well as the usage of fluconazole from year 2000 to 2001. Is there hospital policy changed from year 2000 to 2001?

3. With the exception of year 2000, the numbers of Candida albicans isolated in different year are similar ranging from 11 to 13. I am not sure if they can say the reduction of C. albicans.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
1. In the section of Patients and Methods, it would be helpful to describe how they isolate the Candida species and how they identify them.

2. In the table 1, Total candidemia should list the number of isolate as “21” in year 1999. For each species, they can list as it is. For the first C. albicans in year 1999, it can be written as “13 (62)a”, then put a note “anumber of isolates (percentage of species in the year)”.

3. In the figure 2, label the year by the red square.

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 whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

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