Author’s response to reviews

Title: Empirical use of antibiotics and adjustment of empirical antibiotic therapies in a university hospital: a prospective observational study

Authors:

Julian Mettler (MettlerJ@uhbs.ch)
Mathew Simcock (SimcockM@uhbs.ch)
Pedram Sendi (Pedram.Sendi@unibas.ch)
Andreas F Widmer (WidmerA@uhbs.ch)
Roland Bingisser (BingisserR@uhbs.ch)
Manuel Battegay (BattegayM@uhbs.ch)
Ursula Fluckiger (FlueckigerU@uhbs.ch)
Stefano Bassetti (sbassetti_ol@spital.ktso.ch)

Version: 4 Date: 22 January 2007

Author’s response to reviews: see over
Answers to the reviewer (R.A. Seaton)

1. “I remain confused on re-reading whether all of those who had received antibiotics as outpatients were really excluded…”

All patients who had received antibiotics before admission as outpatients were excluded. This was already clearly stated in the manuscript as follows: “The following patients were excluded: (…); patients who started antibiotic therapies as outpatients…” (Methods, p. 6).

To further clarify this point, we modified the manuscript as follows: “…and 132 patients were excluded since they were given therapeutic antibiotics prior to admission in an out-patient setting (all these 132 patients had received antibiotics p.o.).” (Results, p. 8).

Dr. Seaton gives two examples of patients treated before admission as outpatients. Both these patients would have been excluded from the study, according to the criteria mentioned above, since both received antibiotics as outpatients before admission.