Reviewer's report

Title: Nationwide Trends in Molecular Epidemiology of Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, Finland, 1997-2004

Version: 1 Date: 10 April 2007

Reviewer: Robert Skov

Reviewer's report:

General
This paper describing the nationwide molecular microbiology of MRSA in Finland during an 8 year period is in general well written and holds interesting information.
My major problem is the assumption in the paper that all "cassette IV" = community acquired. Especially the CC22 strain (FIN 12) is mostly described as a health care associated type and CC45 (FIN 10) also very often is connected to health care institution either hospitals or LTCF.
I would suggest the authors to use the information from the survey period to qualify the statement if possible.
The definition of an outbreak strain is only indirect as the opposite of a sporadic strain. Is it correctly understood that any strain appearing more than once in the whole period is considered "outbreak". I correctly understood I would suggest that the definition is changed / the material further divided such that a true outbreak strain is defined (i.e. 10 cases within a 12 month period)

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
The abstract could be more concise and focussed.
page 2. L4 ... constantly increased - since when?
P8 L3 and 14 - Slight difference in numbers - should be commented in the discussion

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
P6 L7: (generally electronically) important??

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: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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