Reviewer's report

Title: Impact of previous sepsis on the accuracy of procalcitonin for the early diagnosis of blood stream infection in critically ill patients

Version: 1 Date: 30 August 2008

Reviewer: Vandack Nobre

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MS: 1527441518213361
Research article
Impact of previous sepsis on the accuracy of procalcitonin for the early diagnosis of blood stream infection in critically ill patients

Concerning the Reviewer 2 comments and the corresponding responses given by Charles et al, I would like to remark the following:

1: Exclude patients with Candida infections…
Authors did no do it, even though they stressed that the significant differences in PCT levels found between primary sepsis and secondary sepsis were kept after the multivariate analysis.

2: Use a different comparator than patients with suspected VAP…
Authors did not agree with it, and decided to keep the same control population.

3: Some objectives measures or index of immune paralysis would support the findings…
Authors did agree with this comment, and emphasized it in the discussion section.

4: Address the clinical utility of such findings.
Authors answered this comment in their cover letter, but did not mention any correspondent modification in the MS.

5: Address the negative predictive rather than positive predictive value in the populations presented.
Authors did agree, and modified the MS accordingly.

Most Reviewer 2 comments pointed out aspects I had also observed in my first review. Taken together, our reports detached several drawbacks from the MS, which were only partially answered. Specifically, the main modifications required by Reviewer 2 (#1 and #2, above) were not carried out.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
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