Author's response to reviews

Title: Chlamydia trachomatis Incidence and Prevalence Trends in Finland 1983-2003

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Version: 2 Date: 6 October 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

Manuscript 4638653121208243

We thank the reviewers for the valuable work with our manuscript “Chlamydia trachomatis Incidence and Prevalence Trends in Finland 1983-2003”. We have taken all their comments and suggestions into consideration when revising the manuscript.

We enclose specific comments to the referees.

Sincerely yours,

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Referee Number 1:

1. The reviewer suggested that the serologic data and lab notifications should be aligned according to the age strata into three groups as in the latter data. We admit that having different criteria for sub-grouping is confusing and is a drawback to the evaluation of the result. As the serologic set-up is based on a use of two serum samples from two different pregnancies, the group of women with less that 19 years of age would have been too low. We decided to present both data in two age groups which are available from the two different data (reasoning added in Methods/par National Infectious Disease Register, line 7).

Unfortunately, a comparison of serologic status to the presence or absence of a lab confirmed infection in the same individuals cannot be done in our material, as we do not have access to the personal identification in the NIDR.

2. Discussion:
To clarify the discussion part, we revised paragraph 5 and reorganized discussion part as a whole. We emphasize that the possible changes in the serotype distribution, whatever the reason would be, is only a hypothesis and needs to be studied (Discussion, par 4).

3. We agree that there is not enough understanding on the humoral immune response in the context of acute infection, PCR positive and symptomatic or asymptomatic, and deleted this part of the discussion (Discussion, par 6).

4. Laboratory notifications for CTR infection are based on PCR based detection of CTR infection i.e. measure infection incidence.

5. We found presenting overlapping data in Table 2 and in Figure 2 unnecessary, and deleted Figure 2 from the result part.

6. The reviewer suggests that the seroprevalence trends may have been effected by the change in the laboratory tests. However, the antibody analysis were performed in one serious of experiments with same lot of reagents. The serum samples had been stored in the FMC and collected for these analysis. (now mentioned in Methods, par Serology).

7. The linguistic check-up was performed by a native speaking consultant

Referee number 2

1. As suggested by the referee, we changed the title to emphasize the discrepancy of incidence and prevalence.
2. We checked-up the figure labeling (deleted Figure2 as the same information is presented in Table 2) and the text was reviewed by a native English consultant.