Reviewer's report

**Title:** Nosocomial infections in pediatric cancer patients: results of a prospective surveillance study from 7 University hospitals in Germany and Switzerland

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 16 January 2008

**Reviewer:** Victor Rosenthal

**Reviewer's report:**

**Reviewer's report MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS**

1. It is not clear why you included 6 medical centers of one country and only one from another country; please clarify it.

2. On page 3, in the abstract, the number of patients enrolled is not clear; I suggest clarifying it.

3. On page 3, in the abstract, Incidence density is not clear; I suggest expressing it as number of HAI per 1000 patient-days, and as HAI per 100 admissions as well.

4. On page 7. In agreement with the authors, I consider it is better to show incidence density of HAI per 1000 patient days and BSI per 1000 central line days, than HAI per 100 admissions; but in order to compare your data with some other publications, I suggest including rates of HAI per 100 admissions as well.

5. On page 11. I congratulate the investigators for reducing 16% of the HAI per year. In order to avoid confounders and to analyze the real impact of infection control for reducing HAI rates, I suggest providing demographic characteristics of patients and severity illness score of them comparing years. If it is not possible to provide such demographic characteristics, I suggest clarifying this as a limitation of the study, or deleting this comment.

6. On results. On the one hand, you have a low rate of MRSA; on the other hand, you already included on the table #4 your VRE rate. I suggest adding a table showing your MRSA rate as percentage, and also the bacterial resistance of all the following bacteria to be able to benchmark them with CDC NISS report and other reports: Methicillin-resistant CNS, Ciprofloxacin/ofloxacin-resistant Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Levofloxacin-resistant P aeruginosa, Imipenem-resistant P aeruginosa, Ceftazidime-resistant P aeruginosa, Piperacillin-resistant P aeruginosa, Cef3-resistant Enterobacter spp, Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacter spp, Cef3-resistant Klebsiella pneumonia, Cef3-resistant Escherichia coli, Quinolone-resistant E coli, Cefotaxime/ceftriaxone-resistant pneumococci

**MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS**

7. Due well known reasons, the current used name of "Nosocomial Infections" is Health care associated infections (HAI); I suggest using the current name.
8. On page 3, in the abstract, you used the term "blood culture positive BSIs" instead of "laboratory confirmed bloodstream infections"; I suggest using the name following CDC NNIS definitions on methods section you said you are using.

DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS

9. On page 1, lines 2 & 4, where the title reads "Nosocomial infections in pediatric cancer patients: results of a prospective surveillance study from 7 University hospitals in Germany and Switzerland," since it is a title, the every content word must be written in capital letters. So, it should say "Nosocomial Infections in Pediatric Cancer Patients: Results of a Prospective Surveillance Study from 7 University Hospitals in Germany and Switzerland."

10. On page 1, line 7, where the running title reads "Nosocomial infections in pediatric cancer," since it is a title, the every content word must be written in capital letters. So, it should say "Nosocomial Infections in Pediatric Cancer."

11. On page 2, line 4, where it says "...and prepared the manuscript,..." for punctuation reasons, a comma should follow the noun "manuscript," for there continues an enumeration. So, it should say "...and prepared the manuscript, ..."

12. On page 2, line 7, where it says "...were local investigators in Cologne,..." for punctuation reasons, a comma should follow the proper noun "Cologne," for there continues the enumeration. So, it should say "...were local investigators in Cologne, ..."

13. On page 2, line 8, where it says "...local investigator in Erlangen,..." for punctuation reasons, a comma should follow the proper noun "Erlangen," for there continues the enumeration. So, it should say "...local investigator in Erlangen ..."

14. On page 2, line 11, where it says "...investigator in Duesseldorf,..." for grammatical reasons, after the last enumeration the coordinating conjunction "and" should follow the comma (,) after the proper noun "Duesseldorf," So, it should say "...investigator in Duesseldorf, and..."

15. On page 2, line 21, where it says "Fone" a more proper spelling should used. So, it should say "Telephone" or "Phone".

16. On page 3, line 26, where it says "Key words pediatric cancer patients," for punctuation reasons, the noun "words" should be followed by a colon (:) to introduce the coming list. So, it should say "...Key words: pediatric cancer patients,"

17. On page 4, line 6, where it says "...anticancer treatment [1-3]. ..." for punctuation reasons, the reference [1-3] should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say "...anticancer treatment. [1-3]" This comment applies to all the references contained in the manuscript.

18. On page 4, line 8, where it says "... (CVAD) [4]. ..." for punctuation
reasons, the reference â##[4]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say â##(CVAD). [4]â##.

19. On page 4, line 9, where it says â##....studies [5-8]....â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[5-8]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say â##....studies. [5-8]â##.

20. On page 4, line 12, where it says â##....patients [10].....â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[10]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say â##....patients. [10]â##.

21. On page 4, line 18, where it says â##....unit [8].....â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[8]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a comma (,). So, it should say â##....unit, [8]â##.

22. On page 4, line 19, where it says â##...neutropenia [11].â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[11]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say â##...neutropenia. [11]â##.

23. On page 4, line 23, where it says â##....patients [5].....â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[5]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say â##....patients. [5]â##.

24. On page 4, lines 23 & 24, where it says â##module already has been used....â## for grammatical reasons, the adverb â##alreadyâ## should follow the auxiliary for the perfective aspect "has". So, it should say â##...module has already been usedâ##.

25. On page 4, line 24, where it says â##...infections [12].â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[12]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a comma (,). So, it should say â##...infections, [12]â##.

26. On page 4, line 25, where it says â##...therapy [13].â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[13]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a comma (,). So, it should say â##...therapy, [13]â##.

27. On page 4, line 26, where it says â##...itraconazole [14].â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[14]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say â##...itraconazole. [14]â##.

28. On page 5, lines 8 & 9, where it says â##...The most important outcome parameter, the ID of events per 1,000 inpatient days was calculated....â## for grammatical reasons, the noun phrase in apposition should be enclosed in commas (,). So a comma should be placed following the noun â##daysâ##, and thus, it should say â##...The most important outcome parameter, the ID of events per 1,000 inpatient days, was calculated...â##.

29. On page 5, line 17, where it says â##Inclusion criteria,â## since it is a subtitle, the two content words â##Inclusionâ## and â##criteriaâ## must be written in capital letters. So, it should say â##Inclusion Criteria.â##

30. On page 6, lines 8 & 9, where it says â##...age [16].â## for punctuation reasons, the reference â##[16]â## should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say â##...age. [16]â##.

31. On page 6, lines 13, where it says â##...CVAD [4].â## for punctuation
reasons, the reference [4] should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.) So, it should say ...CVAD. [4]

32. On page 6, lines 13 & 14, where it says term catheter-associated bloodstream infection referred..., for consistency purposes the phrase introduced by an opening inverted comma (‘) should be likewise enclosed by a closing inverted comma (‘). So, it should say term catheter-associated bloodstream infection referred...

33. On page 6, lines 17, where it says analysis [17]. for punctuation reasons, the reference [17] should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say analysis.

34. On page 7, line 2, where it says Ethic approval and informed consent, since it is a subtitle, every content word must be written in capital letters. So, it should say Ethic Approval and Informed Consent.

35. On page 7, lines 4 & 5, where it says Only data from patients in which the patient or his/her legal guardians had signed informed consent..., in order to avoid ambiguity in the use of the preposition in, it could say Only data from patients who had signed informed consent for participation, either by themselves or by representation of their legal guardians...

36. On page 7, lines 5 & 6, where it says No patient or legal guardian..., for grammatical reasons, the conjunction nor should be used. So, it should say No patient nor legal guardian...

37. On page 7, line 7, where it says Statistical analysis, since it is a subtitle, the two content words Statistical and analysis must be written in capital letters. So, it should say Statistical Analysis.

38. On page 7, line 14, where it says analysis the plural form of the noun should be used. So it should say Analyses.

39. On page 7, line 16, where it says Participating centers and basic data, since it is a subtitle, every content word must be written in capital letters. So, it should say Participating Centers and Basic Data.

40. On page 7, line 23, where it says data on 54,824 inpatient days was collected, for subject-verb agreement reasons, the singular form of the auxiliary was should be replaced by its plural form were. So, it should say data on 54,824 inpatient days were collected.

41. On page 8, line 2, where it says Device utilization, since it is a subtitle, the two content words device and utilization must be written in capital letters. So, it should say Device Utilization.

42. On page 8, line 9, where it says Overview of events, since it is a subtitle, the content words must be written in capital letters. So, it should say Overview of Events. This recommendation applies to all subtitles appearing in the manuscript.

43. On page 8, line 22, where it says reported 27 NI in 30s months of..., for grammatical reasons the numeral adjective 30 must not be pluralized, and what should be pluralized is the noun NI to show the cases of NI. So, it
should say ...reported 27 NIs in 30 months of...

44. On page 12, line 10, where it says ...strategies [18]...., for punctuation reasons, the reference [18] should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say Strategies. [18]. This comment applies to all the references contained in the manuscript.

45. On page 13, line 4, where it says ...Laws et al. [8]..., for punctuation reasons, the reference [8] should be placed after the punctuation mark, which in this case is a full stop (.). So, it should say Laws et al. [8]

46. On page 15, line 15, where it says ...consensus, how severely..., for grammatical reasons the splitting comma (,) should be deleted and the preposition on should follow the noun consensus. So, it should say ...consensus on how severely...

47. On page 16, line 10, where it says Acknowledgement, for language reasons, the plural noun Acknowledgements should be used to indicate correct meaning in such context. So, it should say Acknowledgements.

What next? Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

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