Reviewer's report

Title: Ertapenem versus piperacillin/tazobactam for the treatment of complicated infections: a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

Version: 4 Date: 9 June 2009

Reviewer: Raffaele Pezzilli

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Overview
The authors aimed to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of ertapenem for treatment of complicated infections, comparing with piperacillin/tazobactam which has been reported to have well effectiveness.

Major comments
Data sources: the authors should better detail the methods for the papers search. The data reported in this section are generic. They should also report if the papers contained in the references section of the papers found in the databases were also considered for the meta-analysis.

The outcomes considered seem to be surrogates. The mortality is a “hard” end-point. But, as reported by the authors, three studied have excluded severe infections and this represent a drawback of the meta-analysis. Thus, no conclusions on the efficacy of Ertapenem can be drawn.

Minor comments
The authors should better specify what laboratory adverse effects were considered (I presume the liver enzymes as reported in the discussion section).

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

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.

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