Reviewer's report

Title: Using environmental health officers’ opinions to inform the source attribution of enteric disease: further analysis of the "most likely source of infection"

Version: 1  Date: 20 October 2014

Reviewer: Marilyn Lee

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revision

Discussion doesn't really interpret the data from Tables 4 and 5 and judging by the paper's title maybe the paper is not suppose to. However, I feel these tables represent an enormous amount of work in this study and deserve more attention in the discussion. For example, "food" represents the greatest proportion of overall enteric disease but I don't see any reference to this finding in the discussion. Is this same data addressed in another paper?

Instead, the discussion in this paper focuses primarily on problems (EHO bias, EHO mixing up risk factors and MLSI) and improving data collection rather than the data itself. Quality of data is important too but I would add a couple of paragraphs interpreting the data in Table 4 and Table 5. Or if the data is interpreted elsewhere say where.

In regard to EHO bias, you could recommend a quality assurance program for FBI investigation and the reporting. TPH (Toronto Public Health) has a program where a supervisor periodically accompanies the local EHO in a food premises inspection to make sure they observe identical violations. This might also be adapted to foodborne illness investigation and reporting

- line 88, don't need phrase "published a study"
- line 133, clarify "domestic travel". Is it out of BC? i.e. Other provinces/territories in Canada are usually considered domestic too.
- line 233, space after "961"

Discretionary Revisions

My preference (Tables 4 and 5) would be to place the "overall enteric disease" data at the bottom of the Tables, since this category represents a total.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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