Reviewer's report

Title: Pontiac fever: an operational definition for epidemiological studies

Version: 1 Date: 6 February 2006

Reviewer: Rebecca Calderon

Reviewer's report:

General
In many places throughout the paper, the phrasing is odd and or duplicate of previous statements. Otherwise an interesting paper on identifying endemic cases of Pontiact Fever.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The conclusion in the abstract needs to be the proposed operational definition as indicated in the title. This also means that in the text the Conclusions section should also state what their proposed operational definition is based on the study results.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
The following sentences should be changed as noted:

It heals spontaneously in two to five days............
Patients recover in two to five days............

The conditions of shipment Modes of transportation of biological same samples had been defined so as to guarantee there stability.
Biological samples were collected and transported to guarantee their stability.

The following sentences are redundant and should be deleted.

Hereafter will be qualified as "evocative symptoms of a PF" these major symptoms.......

The study population consists in 560 elderly volunteers from 25 nursing homes of Lorraine..

The term cultivable should be culturable.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.