Author's response to reviews

Title: Costs and risk factors for ventilator-associated pneumonia in a Turkish University Hospital's Intensive Care Unit: A case-control study

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Dear Editor,

We revised our manuscript according to the reviewer's report as follows:

1. The manuscript was reviewed and corrected by a medical writer who has more experience with English language. In addition, some typing errors were corrected on the text and the tables.

2. We selected the control patients with respect to similarity of age, gender and underlying disease with VAP group. Age range was +/- 2 years, this is also added to the text. In the study period, 731 patients were treated in the ICU. Our statistician (Mehmet Zencir, MD, one of the author of the manuscript) selected all of the patients corresponding with the criteria mentioned above as control patients from 731 patients.

3. All of the VAP patients were microbiologically proven in addition to criteria defined by CDC in 1988.

4. Mortality rate due to organ failures was found as 46.2%. This information is also added to the text.

5. Because of it is a retrospective study we did not get information about the elevation degree of the head of the bed.

6. In each stage, clinical and laboratory follow up were done, and antibiotic therapy was given according to the advices of an infectious diseases specialist (A.Nevzat Yalcin, MD, one of the author of the manuscript).

7. The strata of APACHE II scores used for comparisons were predefined.

8. Cost of the patients were converted to USD with the currency in December 2002.

9. Categorical variables such as possible risk factors were assessed with bivariate analysis (Pearson correlation). We choose the variable to put in multivariate model which were found significant with bivariate analysis. The statistics section is shortened.

10. All of the control patients were mechanically ventilated.

11. Early onset pneumonia is described as pneumonia occurring in the first three to five days after admission to the hospital. This information is also added to the text.
12. Results section is shortened.

13. Data about VAP rates is presented only in the results.

14. The incidence rate of VAP was calculated as 8.9 in 1000-patient days. This information is also added to the text.

15. Coma status was determined on the admission to the ICU.

16. The duration of ventilation before diagnosis of VAP was found as 4.0 days. This information is also added to the text.

17. In the multivariate analysis LOS was reported as a risk factor - odds ratio represent increased risk per day as a categorical variable.

Thanks for your attention

Sincerely

Dr.R.Hakan Erbay