Reviewer's report

Title: Screening of Crude Extracts of Six Medicinal Plants used in South-West Nigerian Unorthodox Medicine for Anti-Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus activity.

Version: 2  Date: 3 December 2004

Reviewer: Enzo Palombo

Reviewer's report:

General

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The manuscript by Akinyemi et al. is a technically competent study that has been well carried out. However, the presentation of the manuscript is not suitable for publication. While sympathetic to the fact that the authors’ first language may not be English, the manuscript should nonetheless be proof-read by someone who is proficient in English. There are numerous grammatical and spelling mistakes – too many for this reviewer to attempt to modify! There are also inconsistencies in terminology, such as MR-S. aureus and MRSA. The authors must choose one term (the latter, by convention) and use it throughout the manuscript. There are also some careless misspellings, e.g. A. conyzoides is spelt A. connyzoides in the introduction. Also, abbreviated plant names should have a full stop after the genus. The formatting of tables is inconsistent (e.g. different font sizes, inconsistent bolding of words, Ageratum conyzoides – not Conyzoides).

Question to the authors: What is the evidence that the extracts are immunomodulators, as suggested in the discussion?

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

It is disappointing that the study did not try to link activity to the phytochemical analysis. Which of the many phytochemicals identified are active? Some preliminary work with activity-guided fractionation or bioautography would strengthen the paper. In addition, some work looking at the mode of antibacterial action would add to the paper. Are the active extracts bacteriostatic or bactericidal? This information could easily have been obtained from the MIC experiments by determining Minimum Bactericidal Concentrations.

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

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.