Reviewer's report

Title: Increasing Nontuberculous Mycobacteria Reporting Rates and Species Diversity Identified in Clinical Laboratory Reports

Version: 0 Date: 18 Dec 2017

Reviewer: Brian Kendall

Reviewer's report:

This report contributes to the growing body of evidence demonstrating increasing NTM disease in the US. There are limitations imposed by the nature of the data (eg. uncertain relationship between number of isolates and number of patients) but these are appropriately recognized by the author. The figures and tables are well constructed and useful.

The major limitation of the manuscript is the need for extensive editing. Some examples are listed as follows:

1. There are many typos throughout, eg. line 80 "gage" instead of "gauge", use of the word "almost" in line 150
2. The first paragraph in the background (starting line 49) is confusing and should be revised
3. There are some repetitive sections, eg. lines 146-147
4. The terms "media" and "medium" may be technically correct but are confusing to clinicians and laboratorians in this context. Suggest using alternative terms such as "source".
5. The writing would benefit from editing by a coauthor with a clinical background

There are also two inaccurate statements:

1. Lines 71-73 describe NTM as "slow-growers"; true for some but many of the isolates described are categorized as "rapid-growers" (M.chelonae, M.abscessus, M.fortuitum)
2. Line 109 reports no significant change in isolation procedures for NTM in the last 40 years. The increasing use of liquid media in the last 20 years has increased isolation rates and certainly has a significant impact on the primary finding of this manuscript
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.
Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Yes

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Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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