Reviewer’s report

Title: Evaluation of the impact of shigellosis exclusion policies in childcare settings upon detection of a shigellosis outbreak

Version: 1  Date: 17 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Katherine Lamba

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Title: Evaluation of the impact of shigellosis exclusion policies in childcare settings upon detection of a shigellosis outbreak

Revision 1

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General Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to review "Evaluation of the impact of shigellosis exclusion policies in childcare settings upon detection of a shigellosis outbreak" by Dr. Carias and colleagues. Please see additional comments regarding Revision 1 below.

Overall, throughout the methods, results, figures and appendices, the use of the term "total childcare-days lost" is not always clear and consistent. In some instances it is used to mean aggregate total numbers for all children in the daycare, but then in other places (Figure 2 for example) it seems to indicate childcare-days lost per child. The terminology should remain consistent throughout the manuscript and should be more clearly delineated in the methods, as this is a main outcome measure. I would suggest using more specific terms such as "aggregate" and "per child" as needed, as the terms "total childcare-days lost" and "total childcare-days excluded" are used inconsistently and is a source of confusion for the reader.

Specific Comments:

Tables

Tables 1 & 2: Reorder footnote symbols in the table so they appear in corresponding order as the footnotes; otherwise tables are hard to follow
Tables 1 & 2: The footnotes regarding assumptions for stool culture testing appear to be conflicting or unclear:

- Table 1: "‡ We assumed that the results of a stool culture took two days to become available…"

- Table 2: "Days between doing test and receiving results from convalescent test (Culture)¶" reported as 4 days"

- It appears that the assumption is made that PCR takes 1 day and culture 2 days but the text in Table 2 "Days between doing test and receiving results from convalescent test" seems to contradict what is reported elsewhere in the manuscript

Appendix A

Table A1 and A2: wording of the third exclusion policy, "1 laboratory analysis of convalescent stool samples yields negative results for Shigella", is still unclear. Use "1 convalescent stool culture" instead of "laboratory analysis" for consistency and clarity

Appendix B

Results 1 worksheet: would suggest adding back in the parts of the table that show the "max # of additional cases per infectious child", as was included in the original manuscript submission. This information will be useful for public health professionals. Without this piece, the table title as it currently is in Revision 1, "Number of additional cases", does not make sense.

Results 2 worksheet: add in legend what the numbers 1-3 signify

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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