Reviewer’s report

Title: Clinical characteristics of acute Q fever patients in South Korea and time from symptom onset to serologic diagnosis

Version: 0 Date: 06 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Robert Norton

Reviewer's report:

This is a retrospective review of Q fever cases from South Korea over a 3 year period. There are a number of issues which need to be addressed and these are summarised below:

1. Line 79: Why is Chungcheong an area with a high prevalence of disease? This needs to be discussed with an attempt to further explain the geography, occupations etc.
2. Line 124: A positive result of the PCR does not simply confirm acute Q fever. This can happen in chronic Q fever as well. A statement to this effect that is referenced needs to be made.
3. Line 126: Provide a reference for an IgG>= 256 as being diagnostic for acute Q fever.
4. Line 131: State for how many days were appropriate antibiotics given.
5. Line 160: What information is available on Q fever in farmed and domestic animals in South Korea?
6. Line 192: The patient with PCR POS and IFA NEG up to 124 days: Did they ever seroconvert? If not could this be a false positive PCR? This needs to be explained.
7. Line 267: Provide here the numbers of patients treated and not treated with a Ph1 of>1024.
8. Provide some explanation as to the very significant Male/Female discrepancy. This is unusual Are females in the family not tested?
9. Figure 1 - Provide an explanation for the seasonal trend
10. Consider removing Fig 2, Tables 1,2,3 and 4 - This can be summarised in Results or discussion.
11. In the pdf provided, Figures 1 and 2 are duplicated

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.

No
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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