Reviewer’s report

Title: The role of a sequencing-based clinical intestinal screening test in patients at high-risk for Clostridium difficile and other pathogens: A case report

Version: 0 Date: 24 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Rama Dilip Gajulapalli

Reviewer's report:

1. Do you believe the case report is authentic?

Yes

2. Do you have any ethical concerns? Please consider if local Institutional Review Board approval or ethical approval was obtained (if appropriate) and if the patient (or their parent or guardian in the case of children under 18) gave written, informed consent to publish this case and any accompanying images. A statement to this effect should appear in the manuscript.

Comments: None

3. Does the Introduction explain the relevance of the case to the medical literature?

Yes

4. Does the article report the following information? Where information is missing, please specify.

a. The relevant patient information, including:
   - De-identified demographic information (age, gender, ethnicity)
   - Main symptoms of the patient
   - Medical, family and psychosocial history
   - Relevant past interventions and their outcomes

b. The relevant physical examination findings
c. Important dates and times in this case (if appropriate, organized as a timeline via a figure or table); if specific dates could lead to patient identification, consider including time relevant to initial presentation, i.e. initial presentation at T = 0, follow up at T = 1 month.

d. Diagnostic assessments, including:
   - Diagnostic methods
   - Challenges (e.g., financial, language/cultural)
   - Reasoning and prognostic characteristics (e.g., staging), where applicable

e. Types and mechanism of intervention

f. A summary of the clinical course of all follow-up visits

Comments: Yes

5. Is the interpretation (discussion and conclusion) well balanced and supported by the case presented?

Comments: Yes

6. Is the anonymity of the patient protected? Please consider any identifying information in images such as facial features or nametags, whether the patient is named etc. If not, please detail below.

Yes

7. Is the Abstract representative of the case presented?

Comments: Yes

8. Does the case represent a useful contribution to the medical literature?

Comments: Yes

9. Additional comments for the author(s)?
I read with interest the report by Hitschfeld et al. I would like the authors to clarify the following:

Line 113 - Will need to authenticate the statement with a reference

Line 157 - Elaborate why patient was started on oral Vancomycin and then switched to Metronidazole later

Line 158 - how was culture negative but strain confirmed with PCR?

Line 160 - How long did patient receive Metronidazole and then switched back to Vancomycin. the usual course is 2 week, once resolution of symptoms for first episode but unclear as to why patient received extended course.

Line 169 - how can the authors verify, subjects will not tamper with testing kit or use false samples to alter the results.

Line 173 - How long before the results are available given delay in postal transfer, before treatment can be established

Line 181 - how long do the authors opine before the patients can recheck stool for recurrence. national guidelines do not recommend retesting soon after treatment but rather verify symptoms

Line 186 - Do the authors feel the additional cost of home testing is justified when positive samples need to be confirmed again in a certified lab

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Acceptable
Declarations of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

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5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

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No